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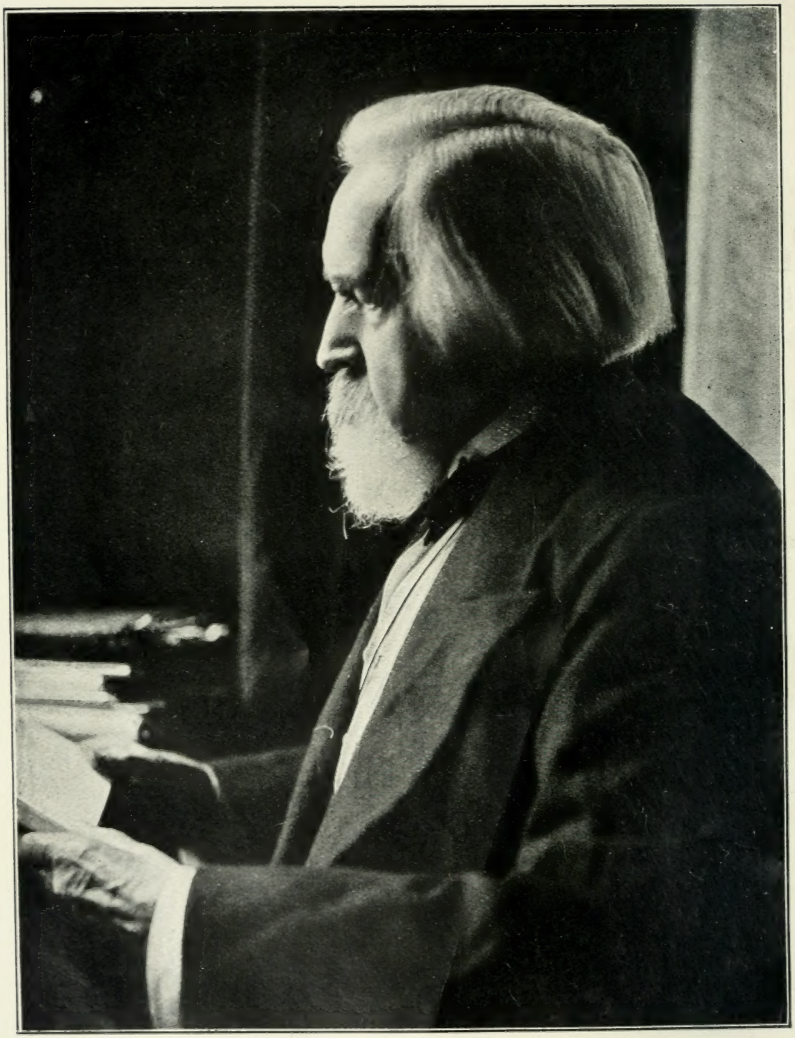
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George Jacob Holyoake

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Frontispiece to Vol. I.

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THE HISTORY OF CO-OPERATION

BY

GEORGE JACOB HOLYOAKE

Author of
"SIXTY YEARS OF AN AGITATOR'S LIFE," "BYGONES WORTH REMEMBERING," ETC.

REVISED AND COMPLETED

Our greatness will appear
Then most conspicuous, when great things of small,
Useful of hurtful, prosperous of adverse
We can create.—MILTON

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[Dedication to Vol. I. of 1875]

To

WENDELL PHILLIPS

WHOSE INTREPID ELOQUENCE

HAS EVER VINDICATED

THE CLAIMS OF THE SLAVE, BLACK OR WHITE,

IN BONDAGE TO PLANTER OR CAPITALIST,

THIS STORY OF PIONEER VICISSITUDES

IS DEDICATED

[Dedication to Vol. II. of 1879]

To

THE RT. HON. JOHN BRIGHT, M.P.,

WHOSE TOWNSMEN OF ROCHDALE

MADE CO-OPERATION A SOCIAL FORCE,

AND WHO IS HIMSELF

A FRIEND OF EQUITY IN INDUSTRY,

THIS VOLUME IS INSCRIBED

PREFACE, 1906

EMERSON begins a poem with the words, "God says, I am tired of kings." Lest the reader should say he is tired of prefaces, I make this one very short.

Other histories on this subject will be written, but whatever their merits may be, they cannot be written by any one caring more for Co-operation than myself, or who has been concerned in its career from the days of the Rochdale Pioneers, or been personally conversant with the incidents and persons who made the movement. I have known the motives of those who have promoted it, of those who have retarded it, and those who have withstood it, and for seventy years have vindicated it against its adversaries. The story of this movement is that of an eyewitness.

The Third Part of this work brings the History down to this date, with brevity, but with sufficient explicitness to enable the reader to understand the growth and trend of this new Order of Labour.

Industrial Co-operation—voluntary concert, with equitable participation and control among all concerned in any enterprise—is a definition that would now be accepted by political economists and journalists.

G. J. H.

EASTERN LODGE,
BRIGHTON,
January, 1906.

[It is but consistent with the principle of Participation represented in this History that the Author should acknowledge his indebtedness to his daughter, Mrs. Holyoake Marsh and his amanuensis, Miss Amy Baum, for assiduous reading of the proofs, when sustained attention by him was impossible—and for suggestions which familiarity with the subject enabled Mrs. Marsh to make.—G. J. H.]

PREFACE TO VOL. I. OF 1875

My desire has been to write an account of the origin and growth of Co-operation, of the literature which fostered it, of the persons who aided it, the principles which directed it, and the influence of Co-operation on the future welfare of labour. To this end I have sought facts of all informed persons, in England and America, saying to them that any books, pamphlets, rules, placards, papers, letters relating to the early Co-operative movements, or articles in reviews or periodicals about it, of sermons preached against it, I should be glad to hear of, to borrow, or to buy. Recollections of early meetings for promoting it, names of persons who took part in founding the early stores, or as promoters, managers, committee-men, writers or lecturers in any place, and what became of the persons themselves, would be welcome to me. I desired that none would assume that I might know what they knew. I wanted to be sure that I knew it. It was said of Hume that his "History of England" would have been more accurate but for the obligation he was under of sometimes imagining his facts, from the difficulty of transporting himself to the book-shelf, where means of their identity lay. For myself, being as lithe as an Indian and resilient as an American, I might be depended upon to get at any fact which came within reasonable distance of me.

My wish has been to give particulars of the persons who made the movement—it being not enough to treat Co-operation as a bale of cotton, and discourse of its fineness and value in the market. It concerns the reader to know who were the

artificers of the ultimate fabric; what were its pattern and colour, its texture and durability.

Let no one fear to pester me with suggestions. Many counsellors bring no perplexity, provided an author takes his own wilful way in the end; and he takes it with many advantages, who has his eyes well open, knowing all that can be said on the subject in hand. The real peril of the historian is that he may paralyse his readers by tameness, or kill curiosity by monotony. There are persons who have a well-founded terror of making suggestions. We have ministers of State who teach that persons with ideas are to be distrusted, and it is not counted safe for any one with "notions" in his mind to go about certain Government departments now.

In some cases, however, information transmitted has not been very apparent, though worth all the trouble of deciphering. All penmen are not gifted. A bird pattering out of an inkpot over a page would be a rival writer to some correspondents, who seem the natural and ready-made secretaries of Secret Societies, since no expert of the most suspicious Government known would be able to make much out of their caligraphy.

It has, however, occurred to many correspondents, as it did to Lord Palmerston, that the purpose of writing is to be read, and that what is to be readable must be intelligible, and they have practised the unappreciated art of plainness to my great profit. My letter of inquiry inserted in the *New York Tribune* brought many communications from that wide-awake land. No case of any undecipherable caligraphy arose in American letters; they make things pretty plain out there.

Where suggestions have not been acted upon, the reader must ascribe the error to that opinionativeness, phrase-love, and general self-contentedness, with which Nature indulgently endows some writers in lieu of other gifts.

While sitting at the Bolton Congress of 1872, when news came of the death of Professor Maurice, and seeing with the mind's eye the old familiar faces flitting, as it were, round the hall—the faces which have gone, as Bamford expresses it, through the "Pass of Death," and greet us no more—watching the vacant places (growing more numerous every Congress) of those who bore the heat and burden of the unregarded day of

Co-operation—whose buoyant, cheery voices we shall never hear again—I desired, more than before, to write some history of that new power of industry which will grow mightier year by year.

For loans of works of reference my acknowledgments are due to Wm. Henry King Spark, of Skirsgil Park, Penrith, for a valuable collection of books in his possession, collected, bound, and annotated by Francis Place. Save for the discerning foresight and interest of Mr. Place in the welfare of the working people, many of the most remarkable facts concerning their social and political life would be now unknown; also to Mr. Thomas Allsop, of Redhill; Mr. Truelove, of London; Mr. David Crossley, of Brighouse; Mr. Melsom, of Liverpool; Mr. George Simpson, of Prospect House, Mottram; Mr. R. B. Reed, senr., of Winlaton; and Mr. Henry Slatter, of Tunbridge Wells, for the use of volumes, pamphlets, and papers illustrative of my subject.

G. J. H.

Newcastle Chambers,
Essex Street, Temple Bar, London,
June, 1875.

PREFACE TO VOL. II. OF 1879

In inscribing this volume to Mr. Bright, a representative of my native town of Birmingham, my object was to acknowledge how much the working class owed to him for maintaining in hostile days the great principle of political and commercial freedom, without which self-help is impossible to the people.

At that time I was not aware of what Abraham Greenwood related years after, that one morning subsequent to the resolution being carried, putting an end to profit sharing in the Spinning Mill of the pioneers, Mr. Bright met him in the street, and suggested that the resolution should be reconsidered at another meeting. Mr. Bright had spoken at times to his parliamentary friends of the great Partnership enterprise in the Pioneer Mills of his townsmen, and regretted what had taken place. Had the resolution been rediscussed, with the knowledge of Mr. Bright's interest in it, the decision, I believe, would have been different, and the fortune of labour changed for the better by it.

Evil days befel me during the progress of the First Part. Though I could see my way through my subject, I could not see my subject when it was through. Fortunately for the reader, Mr. Walter Morrison, to whose friendship I owed the means of writing this History, had the kindness to see the book through the press for me. Otherwise I might have been afraid to recover my sight, lest I should come to read my own pages.

Once I had a printer—not deficient in care and intelligence—who would insert an enraging misconception of some doubtful word I had written. I asked, "How came you to think I meant that? It is neither common sense, nor theological sense, nor legal sense" (the most uncertain sense known). "Well," he answered. "I thought so too, but I supposed it one of your quaintnesses of expression." So I

counselled the Co-operative Printers when sending them my MS. to stop at any "quaintness" at which they stumbled. In some places I am afraid they have betrayed me. The previous volume met with more favour from critics, both in Great Britain and America, than I expected. If this volume fares as well, I shall be more than content; for those who said it "was not interesting" said it was "useful," and those who said it "was not useful" thought it was "interesting."

Travelling to distant places of new co-operative enterprise, seeing for myself the conditions under which they had been made; editing reports of Co-operative Congresses; listening to the speeches and daily conversation of the new race of co-operators, in order to be sure what manner of men they were, and to judge from what they said, what mastery they had of its principles; then writing controversial pamphlets in order to elicit the views of adversaries and learn their quality and reach of discernment; taking part in discussions at store meetings to discover what thoughts were uppermost and what passions lay below, have been well rewarded. It would be an abuse of the attention of the reader, to beguile him with mere picturesque incidents, and conceal from him the motives. The only useful history of a movement is a history of its ideas. The animating idea which never slept or slumbered, which moved the most diverse co-operators, which was oft defeated, but never extinguished, covered with ridicule, but never made ashamed, which returned again and again to generous-minded, equity-loving men, was not distrust of succeeding themselves by competition, but dislike of it as the sole method of progress. Co-operation was born of the feeling that at best unmitigated competition was war, and though war had its bards and its heroic memories, there was murder in its march; and humanity was imposture, if progress could not be accomplished by nobler means. What an enduring truce is to war, Copartnership Co-operation is to the never-ceasing conflict between Labour and Capital. It is the Peace of Industry.

G. J. H.

Newcastle Chambers,
22, Essex Street, Temple Bar, London,
December 1, 1878.

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NOTES ON THE ILLUSTRATIONS

1. Wendell Phillips was invited to our Co-operative Congress in 1876. He was the greatest American orator in the perilous Anti-Slavery agitation whenever equity to industry was in question. He was always spoken of in America as the "noblest Roman of them all." His portrait is from a photograph which he gave me in his own house in Boston but a short time before his death.

2. The old Socialist Institution is the type of many of the earliest places of meeting, and remains unchanged. Rochdale Co-operation began there. (See "History of the Rochdale Pioneers.")

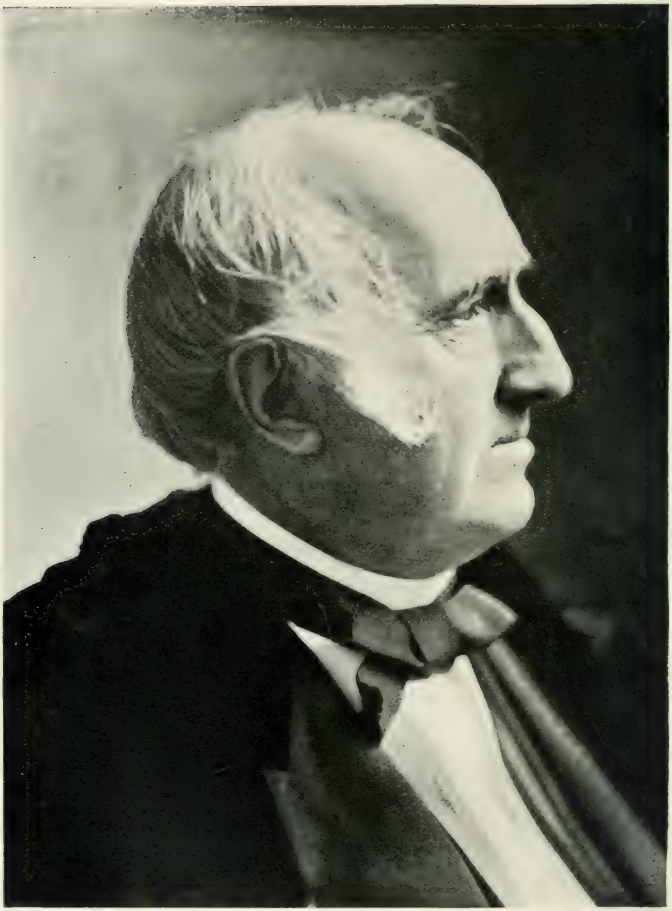
3. At the end of the eighteenth century the Corn Mill of Hull charged high prices; to remedy this a few co-operators set up an Anti-Mill—a mill against mills. It is the earliest relic of Co-operation in England.

4. The portrait of Robert Owen is by his friend the elder Pickersgill, in the days of Owen's early popularity. The original is in the possession of William Tebb, of Rede Hall, Burstow.

5. The Toad Lane Store is where the Rochdale Pioneers commenced business in 1844. A Swiss artist has delineated the Doffers from the mill who assembled to ridicule the humble beginning.

6. The portrait of John Bright is a reduction of the large photograph taken of him by Mayall, now in the possession of James Charlton, of Chicago. It was the largest photograph which had then been taken, and was nearly life-size. It represents Bright as he appeared in the House of Commons when the cry went through the lobbies, "Bright is up!"

7. The portrait of Walter Morrison is animated by that pleasant expression of encouragement, which we all knew, when Co-operation was making itself a force in industry.



Yours cordially
Wendell Phillips

[*To face p.* 1.

PART I

THE PIONEER PERIOD

1812–1844

CHAPTER I

NATURE OF CO-OPERATION

"Distribution should undo excess,
And each man have enough."—*King Lear.*

It is the duty of him who pleads a cause, or solicits the attention of the public to any subject, to state distinctly what the subject is—if he knows it; so that those who confer upon him the favour of their attention at the outset may possess the means of deciding whether or no they will continue it.

Dr. Furnivall could tell all about the origin of the term Co-operation and when it first crept into our language. I find less of it than I expected in quarters in which I have looked. "The Encyclopædia Metropolitana," 1845, says the French have the word *co-operer*, the Spaniards *co-operar*, the Italians *co-operare*, the Latin *co-operare*, and derive it from *co-* and *operari*, which simply means to work—to labour together, to endeavour for some common purpose. Sir Thomas More, speaking of the Sacrament, mentions that "in certain respects it doth nothing work, nor *co-operāt* thereto." Crashaw, in his "Sacred Poems," writes :—

"Bring all your lutes and harps of heav'n and earth;
Whate'er *co-operates* to the common mirth."

Hammond, in his "Sermons," was, so far as I am aware, the first to use the word in the form with which we are now so familiar. He says, "Men will see the original of all the wealth, called such, immediately from God; without any *co-operation* of ours." Holland, in his "Plutarch," makes a

quotation from Timotheus, the poet, in which a form of the word which has never come into use, is employed :—

> "Both boldness stout and fortitude,
> With mental discipline,
> In war, which are *co-operant*,
> With virtue doth combine."

In Boyle's Life there is given a pretty instance of the personal form of the term : "And the success will perhaps invite many more to be *co-operators* with the truth."

Co-operation, in the industrial sense of the word, means the equitable division of profits with worker, capitalist, and consumer, concerned in the undertaking. From the commencement of human society Co-operation has been common in the sense of two or more persons uniting to attain an end which each was unable to effect singly. As society grew, crowds were coerced into acting together by king or chief, who took the profit. In modern days the capitalist has it. It is still common to regard the labourer as being under great obligation for mere subsistence, while he aids in creating the wealth of his employer. The new Co-operation, of which I here write, begins in mutual help, with a view to end in a common competence. A co-operative society commences in persuasion, proceeds by consent, seeks success by common efforts, incurs risks, and shares losses, intending that all its members shall proportionately share whatever benefits are secured. The equality sought is not a mad equality of

> "Equal division of unequal earnings," [1]

but an equitable award of gains proportionate to work done. There is equality under the law when every man can obtain justice, however low his condition or small his means; there is equality of protection when none may assault or kill the humblest person without being made accountable ; there is civil equality when the evidence of all is valid in courts of justice,

[1] Ebenezer Elliott wrote the best description in our language of what communism is *not*. Elliott repeated it to me amid the charming hedgerows, where he wrote his song of "The Wonders of the Lane" :—

> "What is a Communist ? One who hath yearnings
> For equal division of unequal earnings,
> Idler or bungler, or both, he is willing
> To fork out his penny and pocket your shilling."

irrespective of speculative opinion ; there is equality of citizenship when all offices and honours are open to merit ; there is equality of taxation when all are made to contribute to the support of the State according to their means ; and there is equality in a co-operative society, when the right of every worker, shareholder, or purchaser is recognised to a share of the common profit, in the proportion to which he contributes to it, in capital, or labour, or trade—by hand or head. There is no complete Co-operation where this equality is not the rule.

Co-operation, after being long declared innovatory and impracticable, has been discovered to be both old and ordinary. Mr. John Macdonell counts Jacob tending Laban's flocks as a very early co-operator, he being a servant directly interested in the profits of his master.[1] Mr. Nasse has shown that there existed agricultural communities in Europe in the Middle Ages, and that there was a co-operative use of land in England which it would be deemed revolutionary to propose now. It is remembered now that Greek sailors in the Levant, American sailors engaged in the whale fishery and China trade, the Chinese traders in Manilla, the Cornwall lead miners, and the lead and copper miners of Flintshire and Cumberland, have long been either equal or partial participators in profits. The Metayer system[2] is a familiar illustration with political economists. A modern author, who has written with discernment of social theorists, says, "The words Co-operation and Co-operative have been used by communist writers to denote that all the members of a community are to work together for the common benefit, instead of working, as at present, each on his own account."[3] This explanation is on the line of truth, and goes forward some distance upon it.

Co-operation turns toil into industry, which is labour animated—working willingly, knowing the reason why—because the profit of each, in proportion to his work, is

[1] "Survey of Political Economy," chap. xv. p. 213.

[2] "The principle of the Metayer system is that the labourer, or peasant, makes his engagement directly with the landowner, and pays, not a fixed rent, either in money or in kind, but a certain proportion of the produce, or rather of what remains of the produce, after deducting what is considered necessary to keep up the stock. The proportion is usually, as the name imports, one-half ; but in several districts in Italy it is two-thirds" (Mill, "Political Economy," People's Edition, p. 183).

[3] Charles Morrison, "Labour and Capital," p. 111.

secured to him. Co-operation leaves nobody out who works. Those who do not know this do not understand Co-operation ; those who do know it and do not mean it, are traitors to the principle. Those who mean it and do not take steps to secure it, or are silent when others evade it, or do not advocate it when occasion offers, are unseeing or supine. Co-operation touches no man's fortune ; seeks no plunder ; causes no disturbance in society ; gives no trouble to statesmen ; it enters into no secret associations ; it needs no trades union to protect its interests ; it contemplates no violence ; it subverts no order ; it envys no dignity ; it accepts no gift, nor asks any favour ; it keeps no terms with the idle, and it will break no faith with the industrious. It is neither mendicant, servile, nor offensive ; it has its hand in no man's pocket, and does not mean that any other hands shall remain long or comfortably in its own ; it means self-help, self-dependence, and such share of the common competence as labour shall earn or thought can win.

CHAPTER II

THE EVIL DAYS BEFORE CO-OPERATION BEGAN

"Defend me, therefore, Common Sense, say I,
From reveries so airy—from the toil
Of dropping buckets into empty wells,
And growing old in drawing nothing up."—COWPER.

MATTERS were at a very bad pass—as they had often been before—with the working people in England when Co-operation began. There was a certain statute of Edward VI., which set forth in its preamble "that partly by the foolish pity and mercy of them which should have seen godly laws executed" the poor and unemployed had become troublesome: and therefore, in order that godliness might do its duty to society, it was enacted that—"If any person shall bring to two justices of peace any runagate servant, or any other which liveth idly or loiteringly by the space of three days, they shall cause that idle and loitering servant or vagabond to be marked with a hot iron on the breast with the mark of V, and adjudge him to be slave to the same person that brought him for two years after, who shall take the said slave and give him bread, water, or small drink, and refuse him meat, and cause him to work, by beating, chaining, or otherwise, in such work as he shall put him unto, be it never so vile: and if he shall absent himself from his said master, by the space of fourteen days, then he shall be adjudged by two justices of peace to be marked on the forehead, or the ball of the cheek, with a hot iron, with the sign of an S, and further shall be adjudged to be slave to his said master for ever."

In the days when this Act was passed, it was easy to see that gentlemen knew what they were about; and at the beginning

of the last century there were worthy and worshipping persons, who regretted, as many do still, the decay of vigour in the governing classes. What they had come to in 1822 Francis Place has recorded.[1] In that year a poor farrier had travelled from Alnwick, in Northumberland, to London in search of work. On the same day a shopman to a grocer—long out of employ—arrived penniless from Shropshire. Both had come up to London, and met, companions in destitution, in the pens of Smithfield market, where they ventured to think they might be allowed to sleep in the bed of beasts. They were seized by constables and taken before a magistrate of the city. Both begged to be discharged, and promised to make their way home in the best way they could; but to this humble request the magistrate would not accede. He said "he was of opinion that the prisoners were not justified in coming to town without any prospect before them, for they must have known that, in the present state of trade, no one would take them in, nor would any one be justified in taking in a perfect stranger; but whether their conduct arose solely from ignorance or not he considered was immaterial; the magistrates could not know the minds of the prisoners, and could make no distinction."

The Lord Mayor agreed with the Alderman on the bench who had delivered this decision, and who consulted him. "The City magistrates," the Mayor said, "wish it to be known in the country at large that in future they should feel themselves bound to send all to hard labour for the term enacted (which was not less than one, and as much as three, months), whether they were actuated by a vicious spirit of vagabondage, or with whatever professed object or speculation they came to town. In short, they would put the law in full force against all who could not prove reasonable assurance or certainty of employment as their motive for coming to London." Farriers and shopmen unable to obtain employment in their own parish were warned that they must stay there and perish.

In 1825 a dinner was given to Joseph Hume, M.P., in Edinburgh, on which occasion Francis Jeffrey made a speech in favour of the combination of workmen. The substance of Mr. Jeffrey's speech occupies twenty-three pages octavo.

[1] "Principles of Population."

Judging from the facility and persistence with which some Scotch bailies who come to England on deputations speak,[1] this dinner may have lasted a week. The purport of Mr. Jeffrey's speech was to explain the toast "Freedom of Labour," which was expressed as follows: "Freedom of Labour. But let the labourer recollect that in exercising his own rights he cannot be permitted to violate the rights of others." It was generous of Francis Jeffrey, himself a Whig reviewer, to speak at all in defence of combination by workmen;[2] but at that time, and for years after, it was a perilous business for the labourer to attempt to unite, or to be known to be friendly with those who counselled him to do it. There was no necessity to warn them not to abuse the power they dare not use.

Now homilies are read to them against cultivating class feeling. In the day of which I write, it was a great point to get them to understand that they were a class at all. At that time a very uncomfortable monitor of the people existed, who attracted a large share of attention, and who gave the poor a "bit of his mind," which they have not forgotten yet—the Rev. Thomas Robert Malthus. This is what he said to them, in deliberately chosen sentences, and in large type: "There is one right which a man has been generally thought to possess, which I am sure he neither can nor does possess—a right to subsistence when his labour will not fairly purchase it."[3] "I firmly believe," he says, "that such persons, by the laws of nature, which are the laws of God, have no claim to support." Only the rich had the right to live. Malthus had the ear of legislators, and he wrote for them; and this is what he said to them: "As a previous step to alteration in the poor-law, which would contract or stop the increase of the relief to be given, it appears to me that we are bound in justice and honour formally to disclaim the right of the poor to support."

[1] A Scotch deputation to Downing Street, headed by a Lord Provost of Edinburgh, first caused me to notice this. The chief speaker was Robert Chambers. He had been kept some years out of his well-earned dignity, because he was suspected of writing the "Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation" (it being unlawful to consider creation natural); yet I saw him fasten on a Prime Minister, who was overdue in Parliament, but could not extricate himself from that pertinacious visitor.

[2] The Combination Laws were repealed the year before the speech—1824.

[3] Essays, vol. iii. p. 154.

"To this end," he continues, "I should propose a regulation to be made declaring that no child born from any marriage, taking place after the expiration of a year from the date of this law, and no illegitimate child born two years from same date, should ever be entitled to parish assistance." [1]

This language informed the poor that they had better get good information as to how things are going on in the world before they come into it. He would logically interdict "lying-in" houses as encouraging sexual improvidence—he would abolish hospital aid for diseases arising from poverty. The St. Augustine tone prevailed in the churches. Piety was not only dogmatic, it was insolvent. It dictated to men their beliefs. The struggling, whom it could not help—the miserable, whom it could not save, it interdicted from thinking for themselves. The workman was regarded as holding his soul under a ticket-of-leave from the churches; and men of free thought in religion, or politics, or science were treated as a criminal class. Common men were vassals—the mitre their souls—the State their means. And, what was worse, many of them had no more sense than to put themselves, like dry sticks, under the cauldron of corruption.

Historical knowledge was a weak point of the people. Those of them who were politicians believed that the history of the world began with the French Revolution. Old Midland politicians half believe now that liberty began with the Birmingham Political Union of 1830. A stout Radical of mark in Bradford, Squire Farrar, built himself a house early in the last century, and over the door, cut in stone, still appears the date of the declaration of American Independence; and there is a general impression in many quarters here, as well as across the Atlantic, that the world recommenced at that period.

However, without troubling much when the world began, workmen were to be found who were bent on improving it. Trades unionists were among the most active of this class. We need not go far for an example which will sufficiently illustrate their condition and their sense as well as their spirit.

The wool combers and stuff weavers of Bradford published

[1] Essays, vol. iii.

in 1825 a notable statement of the workman's case in local verse, which commences thus :—

"Lads, pray what's the matter ?
Are you with master about to fight ?
'Yes, sir, we are, and well we might,
For let us work hard as we will,
We're ne'er the better for it still.'"

Bradford men always had a stout, unyielding way of expressing dissatisfaction with their condition. So the Bradford Homer proceeds to sound this note of battle, of which the world has heard a good deal since. Answering the masters, the poet sings :—

"We are most willing
To work twelve pen'orth for a shilling.
But more we neither can nor will ;
We'd rather all. at once, stand still,
And form a UNION of our own
As men have done in many a town."

The verse of the stuff weavers' bard, it must be owned, is a little woolly, but its texture is virile.

Things were not in a satisfactory state in England when men like Southey and Coleridge thought of seeking in another land more hopeful conditions of life. Southey's noble invocation to the wealthier classes, said—

"Train up thy children, England.
Where hast thou mines—but in their industry ?
Thy bulwarks where—but in their breasts ?
O grief, then—grief and shame,
If in this flourishing land there should be dwellings
Where the new-born babe doth bring unto its parents' soul
No joy !—where squalid poverty
Gives it the scanty bread of discontent."[1]

The rise of machinery was the circumstance that filled the working class with despair. The capitalist able to use machinery grew rich, the poor who were displaced by it were brought in great numbers to the poor-house. A man so strong-thinking as Horace Greeley had his mind inclined to protection by the misery he witnessed in his father's household, when handloom weaving was superseded by merciless inventions. Even Owen exclaimed, "We are pressed down by

[1] It was a popular quotation long after, and is not untrue in 1905. The *Economist* of 1821 considered that "it deserved to be written in diamonds."

the weight of inventions and improvements."[1] Indeed, in 1807, things were so hopeless for the people that Mrs. Barbauld wrote that "they considered even depredators usefully employed in lessening the inequalities of rank."

Goldsmith relates how he found the reflective shoemaker who had but one regret, that by changing his street he had abandoned a stall where a successor "had amassed a handsome fortune," and died at last over his lapstone, "with seven pounds, all in hard gold," stitched in the waistband of his lucky breeches.

The introduction of machinery for years lowered wages, and pushed the mass of the workmen with increased force against the walls of the workhouse. Mr. Thompson, of Cork, commenced an address, in 1826, to the distressed Spitalfields weavers, thus: "All kinds of labour, agricultural and manufacturing, are rapidly approaching their fated equality—the starvation price, the lowest that even in times of average employment will support a miserable existence." If one whom fortune had placed above want, and education above prejudice, had these impressions, no wonder the poor desponded.

No wonder Social Reformers became world-sick. They called this the "old" world, as though they had a new one on hand. Mr. Charles Bray, the early friend of George Eliot, wrote so late as 1844 to ask whether "commerce and the mechanical arts do not really point to a *declining age?*" All the dismal facts of the day were brought to the front, as though society had the small-pox and had never been vaccinated; whereas the great creature called society has "a pulse like a cannon." True, there is "something the matter with its head," since the rich could display themselves conspicuously in the midst of a squalid people, as some one has said, like jewels in the hair of a mendicant woman.

True, Carlyle is a grim and often a brutal preacher, but to him is greatly owing the improved regard since shown for craftsmen. He created "captains of industry," who thought

[1] Mr. Owen's speech at the Holkham agricultural meeting, on his health being proposed by Mr. Coke. Even landlords had their vicissitudes in those days. Then Mr. Coke's land let at 15s. per acre; a fall in the value of produce might throw it out of cultivation, reducing it to 5s. per acre, involving a loss of £40,000 a year. Even then the owner would probably not need to come upon the parish, while the weaver or mechanic would.

of equity as well as gain.[1] The capitalist was a new feudal lord more cruel than the king who reigned by conquest. The old feudal lord had some care for his vassal, and provided him with sustenance and dwelling. The new lord of capital charges himself with no duty of the kind, and does not even acknowledge the labourer's right to live. His condition is no affair of his employer. Thoughtfulness for the workman might be manifested as an act of patronage, but not as an act of duty or right.

Nevertheless there are few so poor or miserable in civilised society as they would be in savage society. They may die early of insufficient food and through an unhealthy dwelling in a civilised town, but they would die earlier and suffer more as savages; while every one may find twenty chances of rising to some sort of comfort, and even to riches, which would never happen to one savage in ten thousand.

Sir Richard Burton, in his "Unexplored Syria," relates that he went out to visit Mount Lebanon. Lured by writers, whom he says had "Holy Land on the brain," he found life there, though ages removed from the barbarian state, such that he exclaims: "Having learned what it is, I should far prefer the comfort of Spitalfields, the ease of the Seven Dials, and the society of Southwark." Hoarded earning is the beginning of progress. Capital is the handmaid of civilisation. Lord Brabazon points out that "the higher the civilisation of a country the more marked is the difference between rich and poor."[2] This only means that as the refinements and luxuries of the wealthy increase, the contrast grows greater between the condition of rich and poor. This does not necessarily imply that the condition of the poor is worse than it was. This is hardly possible, seeing that in every age it is declared to be as bad as it can be, and always worse than it ever was before. Civilisation gives the poor, who are wise, a better chance than the starvation stage. If a man is Lazarus it is

[1] Yet he could applaud those who added pianoforte wire to the cats with which they flogged working men and women of Jamaica. Men in the negro condition, black and white, will one day have their turn of power, and Mr. Carlyle's ferocious approval will invigorate many a cat, and sharpen many a knife, for use on respectable backs and throats, unless working people learn that fairness alone brings security.

[2] Reports of the Condition of the Industrial Classes in Foreign Countries.

better for him to catch the crumbs falling from the table of Dives than lie waiting for those which may drop from brother Lazarus's table.

The sole sensible question for the poor to ask is, Can they better themselves? The French, demoralised by centralisation, lacked the English habit of working for majorities and winning them by agitation. The tradition of the camp in France was their disqualification for progress by reason. It is showier, swifter, and more natural to man to fight out a difference than persuade men out of it. The peril and imprisonments which resulted from political movements in England the first half of the last century were occasioned by men who had been in the army and wanted their associates to arm.

To live in a state in which capital can exist is an advance. It is only in that stage that emancipation is possible. It is by concert in industrial operations that wealth arises. A man being one of the chief instruments in creating wealth, he ought to get a reasonable share of it. This he may obtain, not by taking it from those who have amassed it, which can only be done by bloodshed, and waste, and by setting a precedent which will expose him to similar attacks in his turn. One remedy is by employing the economy of Co-operation to save capital and entering into industrial partnerships to earn it. This has been the lesson taught by co-operative thinkers, and by them alone.

CHAPTER III

THE UTOPIANISTS WHO FORESAW BETTER TIMES

"Now if . . . any one should propose anything that he had either read in history or observed in his travels, the rest would think that the reputation of their wisdom would sink, and that their interests would be much depressed if they could not run it down, . . . as if this were a great mischief, that any should be found wiser than his ancestors."—SIR THOMAS MORE, *Utopia*.

"WORLD-MAKERS" seems a more relevant term than Utopianists. Those conversant with the history of social projectors will know that the phrase "world-making" is a fair description of the ambitious schemes of most of them.

Co-operation in England was born of world-makers, and it becomes more intelligible when its order of descent is seen. An idea recurring from age to age, and among various peoples, may be a pertinacious one, since experience shows that silly ideas are more likely to recur than wise ones—folly being ever ready-made, while sense has to be acquired. But if it be a matter of history that certain ideas, oft recurring and widely agitating dissimilar peoples, have been mostly originated by philosophers and only promoted by thinking people, the presumption is that there is something relevant to human needs in such projects. Co-operative ideas have been of this character. Men of sense and spirit want to know how it is that knaves are born on the bank and honest men in the ditch. Only the wise and bold venture on untried existence. Then there have been in all ages classes of men who found things so much to their advantage that they loudly recommended mankind not on any account to disturb them, knowing well that men are never the same any more after they have once seen a new thing.

When Co-operation arose nearly everybody said it was contrary to human nature. What was new to them they concluded was new to humanity.[1]

The sentiment of mine and thine, which now seems part of human nature, was once an invention. "Even when agriculture had been introduced," Herder remarks, "it cost some pains to limit men to separate fields and establish the distinctions of mine and thine."[2] Mr. James Mill says, in his "History of British India," that "the different benefits included under the idea of property, at different periods of society, are not the offspring of nature but the creatures of will chosen by society as that arrangement with which is, or is pretended to be, the best for all." According to Aristotle, there were nations who held the land in common and divided the produce, and there were others who divided the land and stored the produce in common. Minos, who, according to the legend, aimed at establishing equality among the Cretans, would not suffer any of them, whatever might be their rank, to lead an indolent life. Persons of all classes sat at common tables, partook of the same diet, and at the public expense. These laws subsisted in force for nearly a thousand years—a long time for a scheme of life to last which would now be held to be contrary to human nature. Lycurgus governed Sparta as grandly as Minos did Crete. Obedience to the law, and the dread of living for himself, were the earliest lessons imprinted on the mind of a Lacedemonian ; and this education is reputed to have endured four hundred years. This "dread" of a man living for himself alone has been long extinct in modern society. It is a true saying that it is liberty which is old ; it is despotism which is new. Plato had the sagacity to foresee and reason upon the danger of over-population, and considered it would be impossible to preserve equality in any State without regulating the number of the inhabitants—a question society has not made up its mind to look at yet.

The noblest body of Jews, unlike any others of which history has made mention, were the Essenes. They deemed

[1] Like the Irish peasant whom Dr. King met, and asked whether he would rather live upon wheaten bread or potatoes, answered, "Sir, I like bread well enough once in a way, but potatoes are more *natural*" (*Co-operative Magazine*, 1826).

[2] Herder, "Phil. Hist.," vol. i. p. 372.

riches to consist in frugality and contentment; nor had they any slaves among them. All were free, and all in their turn administered to others. Among them there was no house, however private, which was not open to fraternal reception. Nor were they enervated by their communistic principles. Josephus attests the heroic fortitude with which they met their sufferings in defence of their opinions and mode of life. Jesus evidently thought well of their principles, and commended them. But not himself foreseeing the rise of the commercial and manufacturing systems of Europe, he left no directions—which approve themselves to practical men—for continuing a plan of life in which men should have "all things in common." Indeed, political economists, with one consent, ignore him in that great department of progress which is their especial study. Nothing can be more disastrous to the struggling poor than that a teacher of the highest repute among them should bequeath to them plans of social life so crudely stated that men should be contemptuously counted as "enthusiasts" who seek to reduce them to practice.

The "Utopia" had great influence on social thinkers. Considering More's position, and the eminence of the persons and interests which were satirised in his "Utopia," it was a bold book.[1] What kind of book the "Utopia" is, and what manner of man the brave author was, has been told by one whose pen lends charm to the meanest fact and worthily recounts the noblest. Mr. Ruskin says: "We have known what communism is—for our fathers knew it. . . . First, it means that everybody must work for his dinner. That much, perhaps, you thought you knew. The Chelsea farmer and stout Catholic, born in Milk Street, London, three hundred and ninety-one years ago, 1480,[2] planned a commune flowing with milk and honey, and otherwise Elysian, and called it the 'Place of Well-being,' or Utopia. . . . Listen how matters really are managed there." [It is Sir Thomas More who says what follows.] "Consider how great a part of all other nations is quite idle. First, women generally do little, who

[1] Bishop Burnet says the tenderest part of the whole work is the representation he gives of Henry the Seventh's Court, in which his disguise is so thin that the matter would not have been much plainer if he had named him.

[2] "Fors Clavigera," Letter 7. 1871.

are the half of mankind ; and if some few women are diligent their husbands are idle. Then consider the great company of idle priests, and of those that are called religious men ; add to these all the rich men, chiefly those that have estates in lands, who are called noblemen and gentlemen, together with their families, made up of idle persons that do nothing but go swaggering about. Reckon in with these all those strong and lusty beggars that go about pretending some disease in excuse for their begging ; and upon the whole account you will find that the number of those by whose labours mankind is supplied is much less than you did perhaps imagine. Then consider how few of those that work are employed in labours that men do really need ; for we, who measure all things by money, give occasion to many trades that are both vain and superfluous, and that serve only to support riot and luxury. . . . If all those who labour about useless things were set to more profitable trades ; and if all that number that languish out their life in sloth and idleness, of whom every one consumes as much as any two of the men that are at work do, were forced to labour, you may easily imagine that a small proportion of time would serve for doing all that is either necessary, profitable, or pleasant to mankind." He who said this, Mr. Ruskin adds, "was one of the sternest Roman Catholics of his stern time ; and at the fall of Cardinal Wolsey became Lord High Chancellor of England in his stead."

Sir Thomas More wrote in 1516. One hundred and forty years later—1656 — Harrington dedicated his agrarian "Oceana" to Cromwell. Hume considered it to be "a work of genius and invention, and the most valuable model of a commonwealth which had been offered to the public." Cromwell thought there was mischief in it, and is stated to have said that "what he had won by the sword he was not going to be scribbled out of by Mr. Harrington."

One hundred and fifty years after his death any espousal of his scheme brought persons into difficulties ; and His Majesty's Attorney-General, in 1793, spoke of him in a very unpleasant way. When the abusive Attorney-General sat down, Erskine rejoined : "Yet this very Harrington, this low blackguard as he is described, was descended (you may see his pedigree at

the Herald's office for sixpence) from eight dukes, three marquises, seventy earls, twenty-seven viscounts, and thirty-seven barons, sixteen of whom were knights of the Garter." He was the most affectionate servant of Charles I., from whom he never concealed his opinions, for it is observed by Wood that the king greatly affected his company; but when they happened to talk of a commonwealth he could scarcely endure it. "I know not," says Toland, "which most to commend—the king for trusting an honest man, though a republican, or Harrington for owning his principles while he served a king." At Charles's death the "Oceana" was written. It was seized by Cromwell as a libel, and the way in which it was recovered was remarkable. Harrington waited on Cromwell's daughter to beg for his book, and on entering her apartment snatched up her child. He said: "I know what you feel as a mother; feel, then, for me. Your father has got my child," meaning the "Oceana." It was afterwards restored on her petition, Cromwell answering, in his tolerant way, "Let him have his book; if my government is made to stand, it has nothing to fear from paper shot."[1]

Forty years after Harrington's scheme of public life founded on equipoise, came the proposal, by John Bellers, of a College of Industry—a remarkable instance of practical and co-operative sagacity. It appeared in 1696, and was the first known instance of a complete plan of an industrial community for immediate adoption. Robert Owen, who received it from Francis Place, had it printed in the old type in which it first appeared. Bellers' scheme required £18,000 in the money of that time to carry it out. Had it been adopted by the statesmen to whom he addressed it, pauperism would have become a tradition in England before this time. Like Mr. Owen, Bellers appealed directly to the heads of the State, and prayed the Lords and Commons in Parliament assembled to give ear to his plan, "by which the common people could be trained in the art of taking care of themselves." He also addressed the "thinking and public-spirited," who appear not to have been more numerous in those days than now. He adopted for his motto the wholesome words, "Industry brings plenty," and

[1] Erskine's defence of Paine, before Lord Kenyon, 1793. This was the occasion, according to Erskine, when Cromwell made the remark quoted.

the uncompromising intimations that "a sluggard should be clothed with rags," and "he that will not work shall not eat." Lest these sentiments should escape notice, Bellers placed them on his title-page. His pamphlet was "printed and published by T. Sowle, in White Hart Court, in Gracious Street, London, 1696." Bellers began by quoting Lord Chief Justice Hale, who said that "they that are rich are stewards of their wealth"—a doctrine which was thought very new when first Sir John Sinclair and afterwards Mr. Thomas Drummond preached it in the House of Commons. "The best account," according to Lord Chief Justice Hale, "which the rich could give of their wealth was to employ it in the reformation and relief of those who want either money or wisdom;" and reminded them that "he who said, 'Am I my brother's keeper?' was one of the worst of men." "The want of a due provision," the Chief Justice said, "for the education and relief of the poor in a way of industry is that which fills the gaols with malefactors and the kingdom with idle persons. A sound, prudent method for an industrious education of the poor will give a better remedy against these corruptions than all the gibbets and whipping-posts in the kingdom." Bellers himself remarks that "it is the *interest* of the rich to take care of the poor." He seems to have had an idea in his mind that there were no poor, some of whose ancestors had not been rich, and that there were none rich then, some of whose ancestors had not been poor; and that in the revolutions of society the posterity of the rich might be poor again, and that it would be good sense to put a stop to any more people becoming poor. He insisted that an industrial college could produce all its members required. The shopkeepers of this generation will be astonished to learn that their original enemy was Bellers. He enumerated persons and things of which he intended to save the cost in his system: He named shopkeepers and all their servants and dependents. Bad debts. (He was evidently opposed to the credit system.) Saving the labour of many women and children. Saving of much separate house room, firing, and cooking. Securing that the land should be better tilled by the labourers being owners.

The profits of the college were to be divided among the shareholders, but the workers were to be guaranteed security

in and for all things necessary in health or sickness, single or married, wife or children, and if the parents die early, the children would be well educated and preserved from misery. The workers as they grew older were to be abated one hour a day of their work. Punishments were to be rather abatements of food than stripes, and that those deserving of greater punishments should be expelled. His plan for teaching languages to the children contained the germ of that system which Mr. Prendegast has since made famous, and Bellers proposed the same abridgment of the hours of learning for children which Sir Edwin Chadwick mercifully justified. Bellers proposed, as Pestalozzi and Froebel have since done, "to *raise the child's love* to what he should learn." Beating children to make them learn he thought silly, and spoiled their natural parts. "Understanding," he contended, "must rather be distilled as children can take it, than be driven into them." He was for giving them sensible employment, as he thought a silly employment left the mind silly. "A good education," he said, "though with but a little estate, makes a happier man than a great estate without it."

Bellers gave no account of himself as to who he was—what station he occupied—from what reading or experience he derived his thoughts, and nobody has asked; but he was clearly sensible and original. His scheme is worth consulting by any community-maker, for it defines the number and proportions of persons in every department of industry who should be brought together. His was not a voluntary, but a State scheme of co-operation, and the only one ever proposed in England. He ended his proposal by answering a number of objections which he considered might be brought against it. One is: "Why should he propose to get the chief share of the profit of the poor's labour, and not let them have all the profit themselves, but give the larger portion to the rich, who are to supply the funds to the college?" His answer is: "Because the rich have no other means of living but by the labour of others; as the landlord by the labour of his tenants, and the tradesmen by the labour of the mechanics." It did not much matter that Bellers gave the surplus to the capitalists, seeing that he first made it a condition that every reasonable want of every member should be well provided for.

His college of labour would have stood a good chance of succeeding because it would have been *governed.* It was no sentimental scheme in which those who set it going found the capital, and those who used it did as they pleased. Bellers' college was a despotism founded on industrial justice—*i.e.*, free participation by the workers in the advantages they created. I learn, through the researches of Mr. W. E. A. Axon, that John Bellers was a member of the Society of Friends, the father of Fettiplace Bellers. John Bellers died February 8, 1725, and was buried in Bunhill Fields.

The reprint by Owen of Bellers' book made a great impression when it appeared, and was reproduced in periodicals. There was another writer subsequent to this social-minded Quaker—one Morelly, a Frenchman, who wrote in the eighteenth century. Mr. Owen was much influenced by what he came to know of his views. Francis Place gave some account of Morelly. Morelly was distinguished for the precision of his ideas and for the mathematical nature of his mind. He said the "problem" of social reform was "to find that state of things in which it should be impossible for any one to be depraved or poor." No theorist ever expressed the work to be done so well before,—no social reformer has expressed it better since. This is what social thinkers are always aiming to bring about.

The Marquis of Mirabeau, in a letter dated 1762, made mention of a family of the name of Pinon, living a few leagues from the town of Thiers, in Auvergne, France, the head of which, a farmer, having lived to see his sons marry, requested them to continue a distinct tribe, and to maintain inviolably the sacred bond of union, by community of wealth and property amongst them. "After having been established, at this period, above a century," says the marquis, "this amicable institution has so greatly prospered, that the Pinons have not only a family seat in the mountains, supplied with all the conveniences of life, with elegant apartments for strangers of the highest rank, who are treated with the most generous hospitality, but they have also several villages appertaining to them, whose clergy, lawyers, and other professional persons are branches of the same stock. The necessary arts of life are exercised in this tribe for the emolument of the whole; and

the superfluities sold at the adjacent fairs and markets, where every one carries with him his family credentials. One tradition of their origin is that an ancestor of great wealth and a numerous progeny, well advanced in years, explained to his children "that their splendid way of living must be greatly diminished if, after his death, they should, as was customary, divide his fortune into separate portions; but that, if they desired to be better economists than the rest of mankind, they should live in the united state they had done under his roof."

The Pinon case is cited because its success was based on secular reasons, which alone are of universal weight. Certain Jesuits are credited with very great success in carrying out arrangements of common life in Paraguay. But Jesuits do not encourage self-dependence in life or thought, and when their enfeebling paternalism ended, the population were impotent and idealess as children. The noble aspiration after truer and higher life, with all the perils, conflicts, and vicissitudes it involves, is better than the softest, smoothest, sleekest, and most steadfast stagnation.

The only instance in which social equality was the subject of conspiracy occurred in Paris, 1796. Its great leader was Babeuf. In those days a blind love of innovation prevailed, not alone in France but in Europe, and was strongest in Paris. Then hope and eagerness had the force of a passion. M. de Talleyrand used to say "that only those who had lived near the conclusion of the seventeenth century could realise the worth of the world to man." Gracchus Babeuf was a young man when the French Revolution occurred. Ardent, well-informed, of penetrating mind, and able to write with clearness and fire, he soon got himself into difficulties. Of what kind nothing more need be said than that it was Marat who saved him from the consequences of an order of arrest. At a later period he obtained the post of secretary to a district administration, and subsequently he got employment in the bureaux of the old commune of Paris. Mrs. Wollstonecraft, who knew Babeuf well, declared that "she had never seen any person who possessed greater abilities, or equal strength of character." His plan was to establish a system of equality by force—needless in a country which has a free press, free speech, and the right of public meetings. For these means

of progress an Englishman would fight; but, having won them, he would count himself a fool if he could not make his way with them. Babeuf was not a wild reformer in the sense of not knowing what he wanted. He had a clear and complete idea of what he would put in the place of that he intended to supersede. His object was to establish a despotism of justice and equality. Robespierre, on the other hand, held that "without the people's consent none have a right to thrust systems upon them; but with their consent, all systems should be equally accessible to them." To the credit of the French Liberals many of them objected to violent modes of attaining just objects. Certainly many of the aims of the conspirators were good. They were for abolishing mendicity as dishonouring to a free State, and for establishing a system of education in common. They regarded ignorance as a national danger. They were friendly to a policy of peace. They adopted a doctrine of non-intervention. They would not intermeddle with other nations, nor suffer other nations to intermeddle with the affairs of France. There were to be no idlers. "Nature," they said, "had imposed upon every one the obligation to work." They kept no terms with those who did nothing. Their words were: "They do nothing for the country who do not serve it by some useful occupation, and can exercise no rights in it." The common accusation is that men of social convictions seek other people's property—whereas the fact is they seek to make everybody work. This may be a very disagreeable passion; but it is not laziness, nor is it plunder. All the schemes of Utopians prove at bottom to be schemes of work and wealth-making. Shopkeepers will be interested to hear that Babeuf and his colleagues proposed to retain retail dealers. They meditated censorship of the press, which the Napoleon family afterwards put in execution. But the conspirators had a ferocious thoroughness and vigour for which Carlyle and other eminent friends of Governor Eyre, of Jamaica, would very much esteem them. They decreed on the day on which they commenced their insurrection, that "to give or execute in the name of the existing Government ('tyranny' they called it) any order whatever should be punished with instant death." Some were "to be buried under the ruins of their palaces; which ruins were

to be left in that state, as a monument to the latest posterity of the just punishment inflicted on the enemies of equality."[1] A dismal kingdom of equality France would have been with these murderous ruins defacing it.

Babeuf and his compatriots failed through a traitor,[2] and came to the block. They were brave men, neither afraid to avow their designs nor die for their cause. Babeuf's last letter to his wife contained some wise and lofty sentiments: "It belongs," he said, "to the family of a martyr of liberty to give the example of every virtue, in order to attract the esteem of all good people. I would desire my wife to do all in her power to give education to her children. I hope you will believe you were always most dear to me. Speak often of me to Camille; tell him a thousand times I bore him tenderly in my heart. Tell Caius as much when he will be capable of understanding it. I knew no other way to render you happy than by promoting the happiness of all. I have failed. I have sacrificed myself; it is for you as well as for liberty I die."

When the conspirators were sentenced, Babeuf and Darthe, the chief leaders, stabbed themselves with their daggers, and were dragged from the court by the gendarmes. Babeuf's poignard broke, and a piece remained imbedded near his heart. Both lived long enough to be beheaded next day, but their courage never forsook them. Their bodies were flung into a ditch. Some country people buried them. So ended the first and last conspiracy for equality! Its conduct justifies the high repute for ability Babeuf won. It was a masterpiece of organisation. Nothing was forgotten. Proclamations, songs, manifestoes, decrees, laws, declarations of rights, were all prepared for issue, conceived with sagacity, and written with brevity, eloquence, and fire. The labour and secret discussions

[1] This design shows that the *petroleuse* business, which got connected with the honest and just aims of the communalist party in France, was no new madness. Indeed, it would not be new in England. An English Conservative lord some time ago had at his breakfast-table one whom I knew to have acted in a plot to blow up London in 1848. It was a police-agent's project, but the person in question fell in with it, and it took some trouble to divert him from it. The said lord did not know of this little affair. The enterprising patriot left the country but kept up a correspondence with his noble friend.

[2] This was Grisel, in whom they had confided, and who had flattered, inflamed, and caressed them, as is the way of suspicious patriots. The club of Babeuf assembled in the vaults of the Pantheon, and this Grisel was the most open-mouthed scoundrel there.

gone through were immense. Nothing is more astonishing than the sublime confidence of the conspirators in human nature, to believe that no traitor would betray plans to which hundreds must have been privy. That only one was false shows that equality must have been a noble inspiration. Phillipo Buonarroti, a Florentine of high family, a reputed descendant of Michael Angelo—and his brillant powers and daring services corroborated the belief—was a colleague of Babeuf, and afterwards published a history—with documents which he had the courage to preserve—of the famous attempt of Babeuf. Among them were the "Songs for the Streets," which had not been overlooked. Equality had its Marseillaise as well as Republicanism, though its notes got stifled with daggers. I quote it as giving some idea of the aspirations of the time. Let the reader remember that the French had found no way out of the long oppression under which they and their forefathers had lived save by insurrection; that they believed kingly luxury and tyranny to have been the causes of their misery and subjection; that the people had delivered themselves by the knife; that they had never seen any other means succeed; that the philosophers had all pleaded for them in vain; that they were firmly convinced that before kings arose equality, freedom, and means of subsistence were enjoyed by all who toiled; that everlasting emancipation from slavery and want depended upon themselves alone; and that one united, uncompromising, and thorough blow would redress for ever the wrongs of ages. Let the reader recall all this, and he is not English if his blood is not stirred by the—

BATTLE SONG OF THE CONSPIRATORS FOR EQUALITY.

By tyrant codes enthralled, by knaves borne down,
Man stoops to man, and villains wear the crown:—
Where is the freeman's voice? the warrior's steel?—
Shall we not stoutly fight, as well as keenly feel?
Awake! arise, at Liberty's command!—
Th' Aurora of our freedom is at hand—
And slavery's night is o'er if we'll but bravely stand!

Oh, Nature, or whatever power it be,
Which said to man, "*Be happy and be free!*"
Say by what strange mischance thy laws o'erthrown
Have yielded place to slavery and a throne.
Is there not *one* will dare assert the cause
Of outraged manhood and thy broken laws?

How long shall man quail 'neath the despot rule
Of a usurper or a king-born fool?
Nations! arise, at Liberty's command!—
Th' Aurora of your freedom is at hand!—
And slavery's night is o'er if you'll but bravely stand!

In ancient times, when yet our race was young—
Nor gold nor war the soul to madness stung—
Each in the land possessed an equal share;
No kingly luxury known, no gaunt despair.
Then peace and competence went hand in hand,
Unfear'd the assassin's knife, the foeman's brand—
These days are ours again if we'll but bravely stand!

In those bless'd days when man, of man the friend,
Nor yet had learn'd to borrow or to lend,
Nature on all alike her bounty poured;
No starving wretch was seen, no pampered lord—
Till fraud and priestcraft, by ambition led,
Taught man his kind to hate, his blood to shed;
Then princes, subjects, masters, serfs were known,
And shuddering Freedom fled before—a THRONE!
Nations! arise, at Liberty's command!—
Th' Aurora of your freedom is at hand—
And slavery's night is o'er if you'll but bravely stand!

Where is the difference 'tween the serf and peer?
Why meanly quail ye, then, with idiot fear?
Bring front to front the oppressor and the oppressed;
Wealth cannot strength impart, nor title steel the breast.
Lay on! lay on! the death-sigh of the brave
Be ours, and not the death-bed of the slave!
Nations! arise, at Liberty's command!—
Th' Aurora of your freedom is at hand—
And slavery's night is o'er if you'll but bravely stand!

The only English account of this disastrous conspiracy is the translation of James Bronterre O'Brien, who rendered great service when boldness and historical knowledge were very important to the populace. He was one of the best-informed of the Chartist leaders. His translation and comments on Buonarroti's History are still cherished by a few surviving old Chartists. Traditions of the camp contributed to disqualify the French Liberals for seeking progress by reason. It is showier, swifter seeming, to fight out a difference than to reason men into the right. Reason is no doubt ineffective for a time with those who do not understand how to manage a weapon in the use of which they have not been drilled. Most of the peril and imprisonments in England which occurred in Chartist movements were occasioned by persons who had been in the army. They said, "What is the use of reasoning when you know you are in the right? Why waste time in trying

to convince those who know they are in the wrong?" And while their plodding comrades were holding meetings, they were planning fights in the streets—declaring an hour's drill was worth a week of speeches.

Violence and spoliation are still charged against social improvers. Judge Thomas Hughes relates in his "Memoir of a Brother" how George Hughes said to him, "You, Tom, don't want to divide other people's property?" "No." "Then why call yourselves Socialists?" Tom answered, "It is only fools who believe or say that a desire to divide other people's property is the essence of Socialism." "That may be very true," answered his shrewd brother George, "but if you are called Socialists, you will never persuade English people that this is not your object" (pp. 113, 114).

Godwin's political justice was regarded, next to the works of Paine, as a text-book of working-class politicians. Published 1793, three years before Babeuf fell, it contained no sanction of his desperate methods. It advocated equality as broadly as Babeuf did; but Godwin added these warning words: "As the equality contemplated would be the result *not of force*, but of the serious and deliberate conviction of the public at large, it would be permanent." English partisans of equality declared themselves in favour of peace, industry, economy, and reason.

Its historic policy was that of progress by persuasion. Among our social innovators have been men who have cared nothing for political freedom. Many have come among them and have encouraged it, like Napoleon III., because they thought social ideas would beguile them out of political aspirations. The majority of them, however, have been men and women steadfastly caring for political improvement—not shrinking from sacrifice or peril when it came; but they put not change upon issues of violence.

Considérant gives an interesting account of the fabrication of Gruyêre cheese in the Jura mountains: "The peasants rent a small house, consisting of a workshop and dairy, with a cellar. In the workshop they place an enormous copper, destined to receive the milk of two hundred cows. A single man suffices to make two or three cheeses of from sixty to eighty pounds weight. These cheeses are placed in a cellar to be salted and cured. Every day the quantity of milk

brought to the dairy is noted on two pieces of wood—one for the milker, the other for the manager. It is therefore known exactly how much each family contributes. They can even keep an account of the relative qualities of milk by means of an acrometer. They sell wholesale to the merchants. They deduct rent, fuel, and implements, pay the manager in proportion to the general result, and divide the rest among the families, proportionately to the value of their respective investments." It is clear that Gruyêre should be the favourite cheese of co-operators, as it is the first cheese made on their system. If Protestants of historic taste take ox-tail soup (Huguenot soup) because the Huguenots taught us to make it, co-operators ought to eat Gruyêre.

St. Simon, a member of an illustrious French family, born in Paris in 1760, was one of the world-makers. He served in several campaigns under Washington, but out of the ranks he proposed no violence, nor did any, except when he came to poverty and neglect he attempted to shoot himself. He, however, survived, regained his generous enthusiasm for human improvement, and prided himself on being the apostle of Industry—a worthy species of apostle who have come rather late in the world. He took no part in the destructive movement of the French Revolution, but spent nearly all his fortune in instituting "A Grand Establishment of Industry and a School of Scientific Perfection." In 1814 he published a scheme for the "Reorganisation of Europe." In 1817 (a notable year, as will appear in amother chapter), with English social aspirants, St. Simon published his work on "Industry," upon the organisation of which he never ceased to write. "Industry," he declared, "was holy, for it serves to ameliorate the condition of the poor." His system was known by the formula—"To each according to his capacity : to each capacity according to its works"; which meant that the community would expect from each member the best he was able to do, and would reward him according to what he did. The followers of St. Simon acquired a grand way of speaking. "If Moses," they said, "had promised men universal fraternity, Jesus Christ had prepared it, St. Simon had realised it." His system attracted many noble minds in France. St. Simon himself shared the common fate of those who think for others more than for themselves,

and died poor and neglected in 1825. One disciple and two or three friends were with him when he expired, to whom his last exhortation was "Be of courage, and go forward constantly."

In 1832 St. Simonian missionaries came to London to call attention to their principles and plans. They described themselves as representing the holy religion of progress—a very good religion in its way, but it is one that never had many followers.

Charles Fourier was the next French dreamer of social worlds who attained great celebrity. He was born at Besançon, in 1772. He began his career in a way that gave no promise of the sublime schemes of passional harmony he was destined to amaze mankind with. His first literary effort was a poem on the death of a pastrycook, which astonished the professors of the college in which he was placed. He was hardly seven years old when tarts inspired his muse. Though of poetical temperament he was attached to business. His life was several times in danger during the fearful times of the Revolution. Notwithstanding that he was compelled to enter the army and serve six years, his gentle and kind disposition never changed. He believed the miseries of humanity to proceed from ignorance; and held that pain, either physical or moral, was the sign of error—pleasure the sign of truth. He issued in 1808 a statement of his views, under the title of "The Theory of the Four Movements." His ultimate work of most mark was "The New Industrial World"; but it was not until Victor Considérant became his disciple that his views began to allure cultivated minds. Fourier founded Phalansteres, and bewildered men more than St. Simon. His plans were as boundless as the visions of the "Arabian Nights"—his statement of them as dry as mathematical rigour could make them; his divisions and subdivisions were such that no Englishman could hope to master them and live. Never were such pomp and perplexity presented to working people before. If Fourier had had his way nobody would have known the earth again. If the disease of social reformers be world-making, Fourier may be said to have had it in a very violent form. We have had bad attacks of it in England, but nothing like what Frenchmen have suffered from. Fourier ends his work on the

future of man by the astounding remarks: "The duty of God is to compose a social code, and reveal it to man. . . . The duty of man is to search for the Divine code. . . . It is manifest that human reason has not fulfilled its task. This neglect has now been repaired, and the passional code discovered"[1]—by Fourier. His last work, "La Fausse Industrie," was published in 1835. In 1837 he died, after the manner of his kind, sad and dejected at the non-realisation of his grand and gracious dreams.

These generous Utopianists put new ideas into the mind of the world. They made it possible for new men to do more. The careless verdict of the unregarding public was that they had all discovered perpetual motion, but none of them could get their machines to move. Before pioneers, for their encouragement, stand the dying words of St. Simon, "Be of courage, and go forward constantly."

[1] "Social Destiny of Man."

CHAPTER IV

HOW CO-OPERATION ITSELF BEGAN

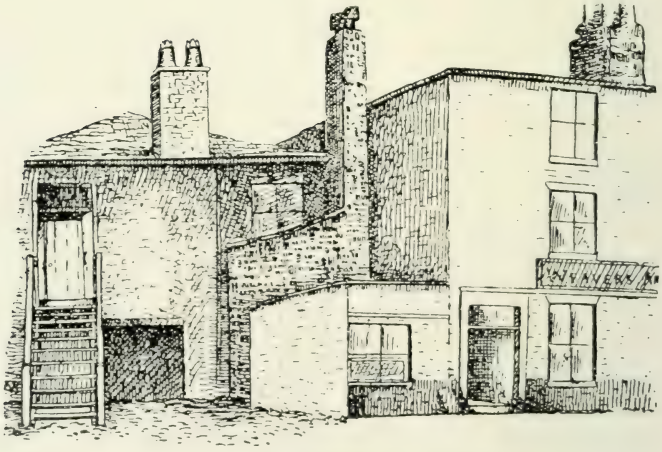
"All around was dim,
Yet his face glowed with light revealed to him."
GEORGE ELIOT, *Jubal.*

THE originator of Co-operation was Robert Owen, born so far back as 1771, a year before Fourier. Nature was in one of her adventurous moods at that period. In the four years from 1769 to 1772 there appeared Napoleon, Wellington, Goethe, Owen, and Fourier—all historic men in their line : bane and antidote, war and art, world-destroyers and world-makers. Robert Owen was born May 14, 1771, in Newtown, Montgomeryshire. He was afterwards known as Robert Owen, of New Lanark. Many will consider that he was not a proper person to be brought forward in legitimate history. But history is unceremonious. Its natural food is facts ; and when it gets them it has no choice, no scruples, and no remorse. In Mr. Owen's days few "proper persons" had the faculty of improvement in them of the kind that the world most wanted, and therefore a wilful Welshman took it into his benevolent and fertile head to do what he could. And thus it came about that Co-operation was a Welsh inspiration.

Mr. Owen was a very unusual man. By patience, industry, sagacity, and kindness he raised himself to eminence and opulence. His life illustrates how much knowledge a man of observation may acquire without books. He attained distinction by two things—the observance of truth in conduct and experience in practice. He was known from the first as a man of veracity and reflection. From being a draper's assistant he became a manager of cotton mills at Manchester. He had a large population of the working class under his direction in



THE ANTI CORN MILL, HULL.



THE SOCIALIST INSTITUTION, ROCHDALE.

[*To face p.* 33.

Manchester, from 1791 to 1799, and a still larger number for many years afterwards at New Lanark, where, in 1810, he planned an Institution for the Formation of Character. He built commodious schoolrooms (one of them 90 feet by 40 feet) for the separate instruction from the time when as infants they were able to walk alone until they were intelligent. No school board with a town rate to aid it now would venture upon erecting premises so spacious for little children.[1] These proceedings being too far in advance for his partners, the building was suspended when the walls were half up. In 1814 he separated from these school-fearing colleagues, made arrangements for new partners, and purchased the whole establishment. Assent to his measures, for the improvement of the population and the finishing of the institution, were the conditions on which he accepted his new allies into partnership. The new institution was completed, fitted up, and furnished in the year 1815. On the first day of the following year, January, 1816, "The Institution" was formally opened, in the presence of all the villagers with their children. The assemblage exceeded two thousand in number. There were present also the principal nobility and gentry in the neighbourhood, with some of the clergy of various denominations. The parents present were astonished at being called upon to send their children to school the very next day. This was the first infant school ever established. Lord Brougham—then Henry Brougham—visited it twice. It was by Mr. Owen's aid in supplying them with teachers that Mr. Brougham, Mr. James Mill, and others were able to open the first infant school set up in England, in Brewer's Green, Westminster. The first little scholars met there on the 14th of February, 1819.[2] Mr.

[1] "Owen, like Plato, laid great stress on the value of singing, dancing, and drill, as means of education, much to the horror of his Quaker partners. Like Plato, he considered ease, graceful bearing, self-possession, and politeness principal tests and objects of any system of education. Where even now could you find such a school as the New Lanark, for rich or poor, setting up these qualities as among its main and principal objects?" (Lecture on "Foreshadowings of Co-operation in Plato," by Walter Morrison, M.P., Co-operative Institute, London, 1874.)

[2] This school failed. Not satisfied with the moral training and instructive amusement, as at New Lanark, the managers sought prematurely to develop the intellectual powers. The tender brain of the infant was overexcited; more harm than good was done; and the system fell, in a measure, into disrepute, until Fröbel, in his "Kindergartens," brought back things to a more rational way (R. D. Owen: Autobiography).

Owen was incessant in translating his theories into practice. It was in these skilfully-devised and long-continued arrangements for uniting intelligence with industry, and industry with working-class competence, that Co-operation was generated. Mr. Owen acted on the principle that intelligence would prove a good investment. It did prove so, and thus it came to pass that the education of members has always been deemed a part of the co-operative scheme among those who understood it.

Though Mr. Owen earned an honourable name for benevolence he was not a man who played at philanthropy. The working people in his employ were in ignorance, viciousness, and discomfort. Their great employer's object was to show them how much could be done by mutual arrangement to improve their condition and prospects. Mr. Owen's provisions in the attractions of the schoolroom, in the appliances for teaching, and the extent and quality of what was taught, have not been excelled in the most generous state in America, and it has never yet entered into the imagination of any English minister to offer, or of any workpeople to ask for such in Great Britain. The weavers and their wives at New Lanark who witnessed this more than princely concern for their children's welfare, knew that Mr. Owen meant them well, as was manifest also in a thousand acts of thoughtfulness and respectful treatment towards them. Had Mr. Owen lived in more appreciative days he had been offered a baronetcy. However, grateful workpeople offered him what he was prouder of, their confidence and co-operation, and their will and skill were new elements of profit in the workshop. Thus the foundations of Co-operation were laid by Mr. Owen and his associated capitalists by sharing with the labourers and their families a portion of the common gain. The share falling to the employers was greater than it otherwise could have been.

Mr. Owen, in his letter to the *Times* newspaper in 1834, addressing his early friend, who had then become Lord Chancellor Brougham, said: "I believe it is known to your lordship that in every point of view no experiment was ever so successful as the one I conducted at New Lanark, although it was commenced and continued in opposition to all the oldest and strongest prejudices of mankind. For twenty-nine years we did without the necessity for magistrates or lawyers;

without a single legal punishment ; without any known poors' rate ; without intemperance or religious animosities. We reduced the hours of labour, well educated all the children from infancy, greatly improved the condition of the adults, diminished their daily labour, paid interest on capital, and cleared upwards of £300,000 of profit."

Lord Brougham, in reply, stated in the *Times*, what he many years afterwards repeated in the House in Lords, that Mr. Owen was the originator of infant schools in England. Lord Brougham said : "I have not the least hesitation in stating that the infant school system never would, in all probability, have been established but for Mr. Owen's Lanark schools. I most distinctly recollect Mr. Mill (Mr. James Mill, father of John Stuart Mill, was the person referred to), Sir C. Grey (afterwards Chief Justice of Calcutta), and myself discussing for some weeks what name we should give these new schools, and . . . after rejecting various names, we fixed upon that of Infant Schools. The thing as well as the name were equally unknown till then in England." Mr. Owen added, in a further letter to the *Times*, that in 1799 he purchased the New Lanark mills for £60,000, and entered upon the premises on the 15th of August of that year ; that he published a very full and detailed account of the new institution, which included the infant schools, in his third essay on the "Formation of Character," and that a mutual friend of his and Lord Brougham (Mr. James Mill) corrected the press for him. It was candid in Mr. Owen to make this acknowledgment of the assistance of Mr. Mill.[1] The reader is conscious of vigour and directness of statement in those essays greater than other works of Mr. Owen's.

Owen instigated Fellenberg to commence an infant school at Hofwyl, which subsequently uniting industry with education became celebrated. The self-supporting Pauper Colonies of Holland were owing to Owen's suggestion. He originated the short-time agitation on behalf of children in factories ; he assisted Fulton with money to try his inventions in steam navigation ; he purchased the first bale of American Sea Island cotton imported into England, foreseeing at once the future

[1] Mr. Francis Place told me that he also was concerned in the revision of the Owen MS.

importance to the spinning trade of England of encouraging the foreign supply of raw material. The great "Utopian" (as persons call him who, following the bent of their own faculties, believe nothing which is not commonplace) "had," his son Dale Owen states, "been received respectfully, and sometimes with distinction, by those highest in position: by Lords Liverpool, Sidmouth, Castlereagh, and by Mr. Canning; by the Royal Dukes of York, Cumberland, Sussex, Cambridge, and especially by the Duke of Kent (Queen Victoria's father); by the Archbishop of Canterbury (Sutton), and by the Bishops of London, St. David's, Durham, Peterborough, and Norwich. Besides Bentham, his partner, he was more or less intimate with Godwin, Ricardo, Malthus, Bowring, Francis Place, Joseph Hume, James Mill, O'Connell, Roscoe, Clarkson, Cobbett, Sir Francis Burdett, the Edgeworths, the statistician Colquhoun, Wilberforce, Macaulay (father of the historian), and Nathan Rothschild, the founder of the house. He had received as guests at his own house at Braxfield, Princes John and Maximilian of Russia, the Duke of Holstein-Oldenburg, Baron Goldsmid, Baron Just (Saxon ambassador), Cuvier, Brougham, Sir James Mackintosh, and Lord Stowell, father-in-law of Lord Sidmouth. When he visited Paris he took letters from the Duke of Kent to the Duc d'Orleans (Louis Philippe), and from the French ambassador to the French minister; and he was invited to the Visitor's Chair by the French Academy. In Europe he made the acquaintance of La Place, Humboldt, La Rochefoucauld, Camille Jourdain, Pastor Oberlin, Pestalozzi, Madame de Stäel, and many other eminent persons." [1]

These illustrious intimacies show that Robert Owen carried co-operative industry into good company, for the discussion of this subject was the sole reason why eminent persons sought Mr. Owen, or he sought them.

The gains and economies of Lanark Mill had taught that the working class could, if they had sense to unite, make something by shopkeeping. One oven, Mr. Owen pointed out, might suffice to bake for one hundred families with little more cost and trouble of attendance than a single household took, and set free a hundred fires and a hundred domestic

[1] Robert Dale Owen, *Atlantic Monthly*, June, 1873, pp. 735-6.

cooks. One commodious washhouse and laundry [1] would save one hundred disagreeable, screaming, steaming, toiling washing-days in common homes. It was not far to go to infer that one large well-stocked shop would, properly served, supply the wants of a thousand families, and supersede twenty smaller shops, and save to the customers all the cost of the twenty shopmen and twenty shop rents and rates, in addition to the economy in prices and advantage in quality in buying wholesale, in a degree small shops could not compass.

When Mr. Owen's plans for the reconstruction of society first dazzled the imaginations of men, hope begat belief that the day of great change was nigh. Many had a sense that society was ravel and cruelty, as far as competition went. But the formation of character was more arduous than was thought. Science has taught men that the improvement of mankind is an affair of a million influences and unknown time. None now can tell the fascination of that vision of improvement, in which progress was considered to be reduced to a simple problem of State mechanism, of which all the conditions had been discovered.

The tireless Newtown Utopian instituted a magnificent publicity of his projects. He made speeches, held meetings, published pamphlets and books, bought innumerable copies of all newspapers and periodicals which gave any account of his proceedings, and distributed them broadcast over the world. [2] The very day on which he opened his celebrated schools at New Lanark for the formation of character he dispatched to Lord Sidmouth the manuscript copy he had made of all he said, so that the Government might have the earliest and most authentic knowledge of what was going forward. Where a great co-operative society now spends pounds in diffusing a knowledge of its principles Mr. Owen spent thousands of pounds. It was this wise, costly, and generous publicity that led the public to attach value to the new social ideas. Mr. Owen may be said to have impressed mankind with them; for he travelled all over Europe and made repeated visits to

[1] These exist now. In Mr. Owen's days they were unknown and unthought of.

[2] He paid the full price for all newspapers he bought, and the price was considerable then; and he posted copies, among others, to every clergyman in the kingdom. Mr. Pare found that Mr. Owen's payments for papers amounted to £4,000 in three months.

America to personally spread the information of the new system of society. Simultaneously with his efforts in Europe he spent a fortune in America in endeavours to found communities there, but up to 1820 no periodical was started to advocate these views.

Things were so bad that few saw any hopes of amending them. The conclusion of most who thought upon the subject was that of the link-boy, who, when Pope, stumbling, cried out, "God mend me," answered, "I think, sir, God had better make a new one." Social reformers said it was better to make the stumbling world over again. In the *Economist* of that day, the first of the name, the editor, Mr. Mudie, was ready to undertake the task, and thus announced the resolution to which he had come :—

"Though far from entertaining a very exalted opinion of my own powers, yet from the mere conviction that the duty ought to be performed by some one, however humble, I have had the boldness *to take upon my shoulders the burden of examining the whole affairs and circumstances of mankind.* The ponderous load is greater than I could sustain, but that I feel a strength beyond my own. Would that I possessed the power to call around me on the instant the choicest spirits of the earth and the air,—that with a magic touch I could at once dissolve the delusions of error and of prejudice,—and, by the genii of the lamp and the ring, *transport* mankind in a moment into that new world of delights which is opening upon my enraptured sight." [1]

The British public, who walk by faith on Sundays, walk by sight only during week-days. In business they believe only according to results. Those who had resolved to make a clean sweep of existing institutions, found full employment for disciples of this thorough-going school, and a broom party of reformers was actually formed, who undertook to sweep error and cart it away.

"Social Science," now well recognised, was then an unknown term. Mr. Owen was the first public man to insist that there might be a "science of society." [2] His doctrine

[1] *Economist*, 1821.

[2] During a period of twenty years I well remember when the phrase "social science" was regarded as much an indication of "something being wrong" on the part of those who used it, as mentioning Sir C.

was that by the wise use of material means men might make society what it ought to be. In these happy and latitudinarian days anybody may improve society who can, and society is very glad when anybody gives signs of the capacity of doing it. His services are accepted, and no questions are asked. But in Robert Owen's days no one was allowed to attempt any good unless he believed in the Thirty-nine Articles,[1] and down to the year 1840 the Bishop of Exeter made things very unpleasant in the House of Lords to any persons detected doing it. Our "pastors and masters" held then the exclusive patent for improving the people, and though they made poor use of it, they took good care that nobody infringed it. Improvement, like the sale of corn, was a monopoly then, but we have free trade in humanity now, though the business done is not very great yet. The day at length came when the most ardent had to pause. The world did not subscribe, and it was left to chequeless enthusiasts to find funds to diffuse a knowledge of the new views. It was then that certain practical-minded persons advised the formation of co-operative stores, where money might be made without subscribing it, and proposed that shareholders should give their profits to a fund for propagandism.

The first journal in the interest of Co-operation was the *Economist* of 1821. It was thought in 1868 an act of temerity to take the name of *Social Economist* as a title.[2] The *Economist* was a title adopted by Mr. James Wilson, the founder of the *Economist* newspaper, who was likely to have seen Mr. Owen's publication, for there was much early knowledge of Co-operation in the house in Essex Street, where I used to see formidable files, reaching to the ceiling, of unsold *Economists*, before it became the organ of the commercial classes. The first number of the co-operative *Economist* appeared on Saturday, January 27, 1821, price threepence. It was preceded by

Lyell's doctrine of the Antiquity of Man, or Darwin's Theory of Evolution, afterwards became. We were all surprised when a National Association was formed for the promotion of "Social Science" in which prelates took part.

[1] This was as modestly put as could be expected by a prelate of that day. The Bishop of London said, "Mr. Owen's system was brought forward by an individual who declared that he was not of one of the religions hitherto taught. This alone was a sufficient reason for him to disregard it" (Hampden in the "Nineteenth Century," p. 47. 1834).

[2] *The Social Economist*, edited by the present writer and Mr. E. O. Greening.

a prospectus, as elaborate as an essay and as long as a pamphlet. The title-page of the volume declared that "*The Economist* was a periodical paper explanatory of the new system of society projected by Robert Owen, Esq., and a plan of association for the working classes." "Working people" was the better phrase Francis Place used in his addresses to them. In the very first number of this *Economist* mention was made of the formation of a "Co-operative and Economical Society," which is the earliest record I find of a name now so familiar to the public ear.

The public had been told that human affairs were henceforth to be based on some new principle. There was a general expectation that the public would soon hear of something to their advantage. At length one day in the autumn of 1821, the editor of the *Economist* broke in upon his readers in small capitals, and said to them :—

"The SECRET IS OUT : it is unrestrained CO-OPERATION, on the part of ALL the members, for EVERY purpose of social life."[1] It was a very small, eager, active, manifold thing which appeared in the name of Co-operation, then for the first time distinctively named ; but during the next ten years it spread wondrously over the land.

In the middle of January, 1821, a pamphlet was published describing the Economical Society, at the Medallic Cabinet, 158, Strand, where the *Economist* itself was published. The pamphlet was signed by Robert Hunt, James Shallard, John Jones, George Hinde, Robert Dean, and Henry Hetherington. It professed to be a report of the committee appointed at a meeting of journeymen, chiefly painters, to take into consideration certain propositions, submitted to them by Mr. George Mudie, having for their object a system of social arrangement calculated to effect essential improvements in the condition of the working classes and of society at large. They took as a motto words from Milton, which were very appropriate to their purpose :—

> "Our greatness will appear
> Then most conspicuous, when great things of small,
> Useful of hurtful, prosperous of adverse
> We can create."

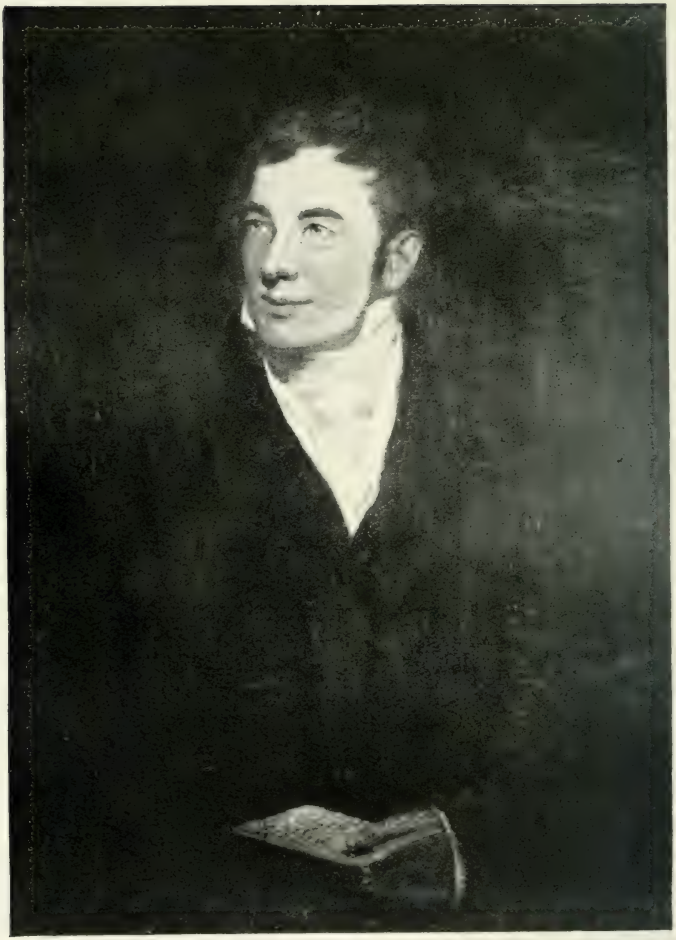
[1] *Economist*, August 27, 1821.

This is the first co-operative society motto I have found.

The term Co-operation was used in the sense of communism. From implying concert of life in community it came to mean concert in shopkeeping. It was a great descent from the imperial altitude of world-making to selling long-sixteen candles and retailing treacle. Doubtless, if we only knew it, the beginning of civilised society was not less absurd. There were in all probability dreamers who stood on the verge of savage life contemplating with satisfaction the future of civilisation, when men should abandon their reckless and murderous habits and master methods of thrift and peace. And when that new order began, now described as the dawn of civilisation, there must have been persons with a fine sense of contempt for those petty transactions of barter, out of which capital and commerce grew, which have finally covered the earth with palaces and raised private individuals to an opulence surpassing that of monarchs. Had there been leading articles, reviews, and political economists in those days, how these dreamers who brought about modern society would have been held up to derision and have been glad to hide their abashed heads!

Mr. Owen entertained the belief that "if the bad position of men's affairs proceed not from necessity but from errors, there is hope that when those errors are forsaken or corrected a great change for the better may ensue." "It is comparatively of little avail," Mr. Owen was accustomed to say, "to give to either young or old 'precept upon precept, and line upon line,' unless the means shall be also prepared to train them in good practical habits." These were the convictions which gave him strength and made him useful. When passing by the new Royal Exchange, London, he, looking up at it, said to a friend (Thomas Allsop) with him—"We shall have that one day. The old system must give way. It will come down of its own weight." The course of progress in this country is otherwise. Society does not come down. The originator of Co-operation never foresaw that a minor part of his views was destined to obtain a strange ascendancy. Who would have dreamed that flannel weavers, mechanics, and shoemakers of Rochdale, in 1844, were founding a movement the voice of which would pass like a cry of deliverance into

the camps of industry in many lands, and since cause shopkeepers in every town and city of the British Empire to scream with dread, cry to members of Parliament, and crowd the offices of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, praying to be rescued from the Red Sea of Co-operation, lest it should submerge their huxtering. But Co-operation is more merciful than the Egyptian waves, the Pharaohs of capital and competition will be saved, although they have brought—as co-operators contend—plagues of poverty upon the people. Co-operation, Mr. Owen no more constructed than George Stephenson did that railway system, which a thousand unforeseen exigencies have suggested and a thousand brains matured. But, as Stephenson made railway locomotion possible, so Owen set men's minds on the track of Co-operation, and time and need, faith and thought, have made it what it is.



Yours affectionately Robert Owen

[To face p. 43

CHAPTER V

THE CHARACTER OF ITS DISCOVERER

"There is a way of winning more by love than fear;
Force works on servile nature—not the free:
He that's compelled to goodness may be good,
But 'tis but for that fit: where others, drawn
By softness and example, get a habit."—BEN JONSON.

THERE cannot be an adequate record of the co-operative movement without taking into account the influence of Mr. Owen's proceedings upon its fortunes. It was often involved in theological conflicts. Mr. Owen was the chief cause of this. He could not very well avoid giving battle to several kinds of adversaries, and, being a Welshman, I have no doubt he did it with good-will.

Robert Owen was the only Welshman I ever knew who did not think Wales the world, and he no sooner comprehended that there was a wider world elsewhere than he acted like one who had taken possession of it, and finding it in disorder, suggested how it might be put straight. He was the first publicist among us who looked with royal eyes upon children. He regarded grown persons as being proprietors of the world—bound to extend the rites of hospitality to all arrivals in it. He considered little children as little guests, to be welcomed with gentle courtesy and tenderness, to be offered knowledge and love, and charmed with song and flowers, so that they might be glad and proud that they had come into a world which gave them happiness, and only asked of them goodness. Duke Bernard, of Saxe-Weimar said, with admirable comprehensiveness, "Mr. Owen looked to nothing less than to renovate the world, to extirpate all evil, to banish all punishment, to create like views and like wants, and to

guard against all conflicts and hostilities." Finding pious benevolence seeking progress by prayer, which did not bring it, Mr. Owen boldly proposed to substitute for it scientific benevolence, which seeks human improvement by material methods. "Here," he said, if not in terms in theory, "is the new path of deliverance, where no thought is lost, no effort vain ; where the victory is always to the wise and the patient, and the poor who believe will no longer be betrayed." We know not now what courage it required to say this when Mr. Owen said it. Gentlemen expected to provide the poor with their religion. If they subscribed to any school this was their chief object, for very little secular learning was imparted. In Sunday schools spelling, reading, writing, and arithmetic were subordinated to the Catechism. Mr. Owen gave lessons in the knowledge of the world in his schools. Both the clergy and dissenting ministers regarded with jealousy any influence not under their direction, and they made it difficult for social improvers to do anything.

To teach common people the arts of self-help, the wisdom of choosing their own opinions, and to believe only in that religion which brought them actual deliverance from dependence and want, was not a popular thing to do. Mr. Owen had the fate of Paine before him. Paine excelled all politicians in teaching principles. Ebenezer Elliott told me Paine was the greatest master of metaphor he had known. Cobbett's writings were vigorous wordiness, compared with Paine's finished thoroughness. The pen of Paine did as much as the sword of Washington to effect American independence. He was one whose writings Pitt thought it worth while to study. He was one of the founders of National Independence whom Washington, Jefferson, and Franklin consulted.

Owen, like Paine, for protesting against Theology as an obstruction to Humanity, suffered like penalty. From being the associate of the first men of his time, he had to appeal to working people to give effect to his views.

Mr. Owen was ready in public speech. Cambridge scholars, utterly prejudiced against him, were struck with the dignity of his bearing at the memorable meetings at the City or London Tavern in 1817. After a lapse of fifty-six years one of those present related that when Mr. Owen said, "all

the religions of the world were wrong," he thought him beyond the rank of common men. He seemed to this hearer to grow loftier in stature. The vast and various audience listened as men breathless. Then they broke out into tumultuous cheering at the courageous act of the speaker. Indeed, I modify the terms in which that day has been spoken of to me. Readers now would not understand the impression made; and for any purpose of persuasion it is useless to say more than will seem probable to those addressed. Mr. Owen's reputation for great wealth, the munificence of his known gifts, his personal sincerity, his high connections, the novelty of his views,—all lent elements of popular interest to what he said on subjects on which no gentleman, save he, ventured to say anything. He had made himself the first Captain of Industry. He had accomplished wonders never attempted before by any manufacturer. Statesmen from every part of Europe had been allured to New Lanark, and, for all any one knew, he might be able to demonstrate what no statesman had deemed it possible to compass.

The determination to make the formidable statement described, at that particular time, his son relates, was come to suddenly. Certain sectarian publications, seeing favourable notices in the *Times* of his proceedings at his first and second meeting in the London Tavern, began to call upon him to make a declaration of his views on religion, which up to that time he had withheld. Theological charges were made against him.[1] He had, however, maintained a proud reticence. As he enjoyed the personal respect of several eminent prelates—for the best educated are always the most tolerant—Mr. Owen could well afford to pass the lower sort by. As they were capable of doing harm, Mr. Owen, who was brave and not politic, defied them. It was the consciousness of this which helped to move the wonder and enthusiasm of the densely

[1] His son, Robert Dale, relates that he was with him during his examination by a committee of the House of Commons, when he gave evidence on the condition of the factory children, and heard Sir George Philips put questions to his father in an insolent tone as to his religious opinions. Brougham, who was also on the committee, resented this irrelevant offensiveness, and moved that the cross-examination in question be expunged from the record, and it was done. If, however, a gentleman's personal opinions could be attacked in a Parliamentary committee, the reader can imagine what took place elsewhere.

packed and excited audience, and of thousands outside trying in vain to obtain admission. "What, my friends," he began, "has hitherto retarded the advancement of your race to a high state of virtue and happiness? Who can answer that question? Who dares answer but with his life in his hand?—a ready and willing victim to the truth and to the emancipation of the world from its long bondage of error, crime, and misery. Behold that victim! On this day! in this hour! even now! shall those bonds be burst asunder, never more to reunite while the world lasts!"

This enthusiasm and pluck, moved the admiration alike of those who approved, and those who dissented, from this dangerous and impolitic speech. The consequences soon came home to him. He had friends too powerful for his life to be in danger; but those who could save his life could not save his influence. And in after years, at public meetings in the provinces, his life was often in jeopardy, and he was only saved by the intrepidity of working men, who protected him. The *Times* soon wheeled into line against him—the Conservative and influential classes deserted him. Only the Duke of Kent and Lord Brougham stood by him to the end.[1]

From being a social reformer he had commenced to be a religious reformer. An ominous meeting in the Rotunda of Dublin in 1823 was fatal to his new world. Society set its face against him, and the people were too poor to carry his ideas out. The father of Queen Victoria stood true. He said at one of Mr. Owen's meetings, two years after he had denounced all religions, "If I understand Mr. Owen's principles, they lead him not to interfere to the injury of any sect; but he claims for himself that which he is so desirous to obtain for his fellow-creatures—'religious liberty and freedom of conscience'; and these he contends for because his experience compels him to conclude that these principles are now necessary to secure the well-being and good order of society." This is excellently put, and is really what Mr. Owen meant. Being always a Theist, he was logically in error in denouncing "all religions." His province was to maintain, as the Duke of Kent puts it, "religious liberty and freedom of conscience."

[1] *Vide* Autobiography of Robert Dale Owen.

In those alarmed days, when politicians and capitalists were as terrified as shopkeepers at Co-operation, Mr. Owen countenanced the discussion of a new question, which has strangely passed out of the sight of history. Mr. James Mill had written in the "Encyclopædia Britannica," as Malthus had done before, that it was both desirable and profitable to limit the families of the poor. Mill despised working people who crowded the labour market with their offspring, and then complained of the lowness of wages and the want in their homes. Certainly a man or woman supplicating a relieving officer, treated as a burden on the parish, and advised to emigrate, as the needy shopkeeper assessed for poor-rates is, compelled to begrudge the flesh on their bones—is a humiliating business, so shocking and deplorable that those who come to it had better never have been born. Any legitimate remedy which the wit of man could devise having this object would seem purity and dignity by the side of this degradation. Community-makers soon found that the inmates would come to certain ruin if the houses were overrun with children, and they listened to the Malthus and Mill warning. Mr. Owen, who always gave heed to the philosophers, took steps to give effect to their advice. No man had a better right than he to invent the maxim he was fond of using—"Truth without mystery, mixture of error, or fear of man." He was not able to obtain truth free from error; but he was, beyond question, free from the fear of man.

This question concerned none save the poor, and he boldly counselled them against supplying offspring to be ground up alive in the mill of capital; or be cast aside when the labour market was glutted to fall into the hands of the constable or the parish overseer. The subject was regarded by the public then as the question of cremation was, which could never be mentioned in any periodical with tolerance. Cremation, to the surprise of everybody now—a question supposed to be innured with the ashes of Shelley—has become popular.

No notice of this curious episode in Mr. Owen's life occurs in the biographies of him which have appeared since his death. Mr. Sargant has brought together a variety of facts which it must have taken considerable research and cost to accumulate. Though Mr. Sargant's views are antagonistic, he never

calumniates, although he often fails to judge accurately; but as he is never dull, never indecisive, and often right in the opinion he forms, he is an instructive writer to those who incline to the side of the innovators.

Mr. Dale Owen might have given the world an incomparable life of his father, such as otherwise we are not likely to see. He had opportunities which no man, save he, possessed. For a period of half a century almost every man in Europe and America engaged in any forlorn hope of progress had communications at one time or the other with Mr. Robert Owen. Robert Dale published a work casting limited light on his father's career. His "Footfalls on the Boundary of Another World" reads as though it were written by a man who had left this. He has apparently given us from scant notes twenty-seven years of autobiography in "Threading my Way," which, however, serves to show how curious and valuable a history of his father it would be in his power to write.

That I take to be the manliest reverence which praises within the limits of truth. The flatterer is either a knave who intends to impose upon you, or a patron who intends to befool you, or a coward who applauds because he has not the courage to condemn you, or a weak-eyed man who can only see one thing at a time. Those are wise who avoid the men who by wholesale praise hide from a man what he should be and keep him what he is. Prefer the man who blows hot and cold to him who blows all hot, because it is better to be invigorated than to be stifled. Believing so, I speak frankly as well as affectionately of Mr. Owen.

It is no part of my object to represent him other than he was. Though he was an amiable, he was, doubtless, at times a somewhat tiresome reformer. When he called a meeting together, those who attended never knew when they would separate. He was endowed with great natural capacity for understanding public affairs, and was accustomed to give practical and notable opinions upon questions quite apart from his own doctrines. His society was sought as that of a man who had the key of many State difficulties. Those know little of him who suppose that he owed his distinction to his riches. A man must be wise as well as wealthy to achieve the illustrious friendships which marked his career. He had

personally an air of natural nobility about him. He had, as the *Daily News* said, "an instinct to rule and command." In youth and middle age he must have been an actor on the political stage of no mean mark. He always spoke as "one having authority." He had a voice of great compass, thorough self-possession, and becoming action. Like many other men, he spoke much better than he wrote. When he was but twenty years of age he applied to Mr. Drinkwater for a responsible position. He was told "he was so young." "Yes," answered Mr. Owen, "that used to be said of me several years ago, but I did not expect to have it brought against me now." His boldness never deserted him. On one occasion William Johnson Fox, the famous preacher and anti-Corn Law orator, delivered a discourse in South Place Chapel on Mr. Owen's co-operative system. Some of his remarks being founded on a manifest misconception of it, Mr. Owen, who was present, rose before the final hymn was given out, and addressed the congregation in a speech of great dignity and propriety, and corrected the error of the orator. Though the proceeding was most unusual, and would only have been permitted in a place of worship where freedom of conscience was not only maintained but conceded, Mr. Owen acquitted himself so well that no one felt any sense of unseemliness in what he did.[1]

Mr. Owen was an apostle, not a rhetorician. He never looked all round his statements (as Mr. Cobden did) to see where the ignorant might misconstrue them, or the enemy could come up and pervert them. He said "man was the creature of circumstances" for thirty years before he added the important words, "acting previous to and after his birth." He had the fatal ideas of the New Testament that equality was to be attained by granting to a community "all things in common" at the commencement. Whereas equality is the result, not the beginning. You must start with inequality and authority, steering steadily towards self-government and the accumulation of the common gains, until independence is secured to all. Mr. Owen looked upon men through the spectacles of his own good-nature. He seldom took Lord

[1] Mr. David Dale, who was a shrewd, discerning man, once said to Mr. Owen, "Thou needest to be very right, Robert, for thou art very positive."

Brougham's advice "to pick his men." He never acted on the maxim that the working class are as jealous of each other as the upper classes are of them. The resolution he displayed as a manufacturer he was wanting in as a founder of communities. Recognising his capacity as a manufacturer, even Allen, his eminent Quaker partner, wrote to him, "Robert Owen, thou makest a bargain in a masterly manner!" Sir John, then Dr. Bowring, said that the only time Jeremy Bentham ever made money was when he was a partner of Mr. Owen. No leader ever took so little care as Mr. Owen in guarding his own reputation. He scarcely protested when others attached his name to schemes which were not his. The failure of Queenwood was not chargeable to him. When his advice was not followed he would say: "Well, gentlemen, I tell you what you ought to do. You differ from me. Carry out your own plans. Experience will show you who is right." When the affair went wrong then it was ascribed to him. Whatever failed under his name the public inferred failed *through him*. Mr. Owen was a general who never provided himself with a rear guard. While he was fighting in the front ranks priests might come up and cut off his commissariat. His own troops fell into pits against which he had warned them. Yet he would write his next dispatch without it occurring to him to mention his own defeat, and he would return to his camp without missing his army. Yet society is not so well served that it need hesitate to forgive the omissions of its generous friends. To Mr. Owen will be accorded the distinction of being a philosopher who devoted himself to founding a Science of Social Improvement—a philanthropist who gave his fortune to advance it. Association, which was but casual before his day, he converted into a policy and taught it as an art. He substituted Co-operation for coercion in the conduct of industry—the willing co-operation of intelligence certain of its own reward, for sullen labour enforced by the necessity of subsistence, seldom to be relied on and never satisfied.

Southey, who was a competent judge of public men in his day, said: "I would class Owen in a triad as one of the three men who have in this generation given an impulse to the moral world, Clarkson and Dr. Bell are the other two.

They have seen the firstfruits of their harvest; so, I think, would Owen ere this, if he had not alarmed the better part of the nation by proclaiming opinions upon the most momentous of all subjects. Yet I admire the man; and readily admit that his charity is a better plank than the faith of an intolerant and bitter-minded bigot, who, as Warburton says, 'counter-works his Creator, makes God after man's image, and chooses the worst model he can find—himself.'" Mr. Owen had an accessible manner and a friendly face. There was a charm that those who approached him always found in his mind. Great or low, each felt assured, as the poet puts it—

"There can live no *hatred* in thine eye."

The impression that Mr. Owen made upon workmen of his time is best described by one who won for himself a distinguished name as a working-class poet—Ebenezer Elliott. In an address to him, sent by trade-unionists of Sheffield in 1834, Elliott says: "You came among us as a rich man among the poor and did not call us a rabble. This is a phenomenon new to us. There was no sneer on your lips, no covert scorn in your tone." That this distinction struck Elliott shows us how working men were then treated. It was in reply to this address that Mr. Owen made a remark which is an axiom in the best political Liberalism of these days. He said "Injustice is a great mistake." He saw that it was not merely wrong, wicked, malevolent, hateful; he believed that injustice did not answer in business—in fact, that it did not pay. This is becoming understood now. Here and there we may hear a wise employer say: "I cannot afford to pay my men badly." There are co-operative productive societies which have not quite learned this yet. Indeed, it has taken a long time for employers to see that the workman, like the inanimate tools he uses, can only be efficient when made of good material, is of good temper, and kept in good condition.

A society in Sheffield, which has never been a sentimental place, bore the sentimental name of the "Sheffield Regeneration Society." Mr. Owen was in favour of a rule of eight hours' labour; he being a very early advocate of what is now thought impossible. The Sheffield society did not believe that the world could be regenerated in eight hours, and addressed

Mr. Owen for an explanation. The document was written by Ebenezer Elliott, and was a good specimen of his prose style. It had this passage: "Dr. Chalmers, though he bids us die unmarried, does not really wish that the noble race of Watt and Burns, Locke and Milton, should become extinct. . . . William Cobbett, almost a great man, and once our only champion [a phrase he afterwards used in his famous epitaph on Cobbett[1]], seems to be mystifying himself and trying to mystify others on the all-important subject; but we do not call him either rogue or fool." Elliott ended by saying that the appropriate epitaph for the great communist's tomb—when he arrived at one—would be :—

"In the land of castes Owen was a Man."

When Mr. Owen first proposed to his partners to institute educational arrangements at their works he admitted that there might be loss. Bentham, Allen, and other or his partners resolved to run the risk, which in the end led to great fame and profit. When the partners who opposed the outlay retired the Lanark Mills were brought to the hammer. They depreciated the property, spreading about reports that Mr. Owen had ruined it, and that the business was not worth £40,000. They intended buying it themselves. But the philanthropist had an eye to business, and sent his solicitor to bid against them. The discontented partners bid in person, and actually bid themselves upwards of £110,000 for property they had declared worth £40,000 only. Mr. Owen bought it for £114,000. They knew that it was worth greatly more, and regretted all their days their folly and their loss. They had prematurely invited a large party of friends to a congratulation banquet on the day of the sale, and they had to play the part of hosts without appetite or exhilaration to guests unable to console them. When the news reached the Lanark workmen that Mr. Owen was to be their future

[1] The reader may see that Elliott, when he came to write his epitaph on Cobbett, must have recurred to this address. It was this :—

"Our friend, when other friend we'd none ;
Our champion, when we had but one ;
Cursed by all knaves, beneath this sod
Bill Cobbett lies—a *Man* by God."

master the place was illuminated. When Mr. Owen and his new partners went down the workpeople and inhabitants for miles round went out to greet them with music. The horses were ungeared and, amid the acclamations of thousands, they were drawn in triumph into the town. Mr. Owen's Quaker partners with him were astounded. Never before were followers of George Fox sharers in such a demonstration. And few have been the employers who have been welcomed back by their workpeople as Mr. Owen was. These facts have had great influence in making employers genial and considerate to persons in their mills, though none have equalled the great founder of the system. These facts are worth remembering by the new co-operative companies continually forming, animated by the common notion that niggardliness is economy and that shabbiness can bring satisfaction.

Wesleyanism dotted the country with prayer-meetings—Chartism covered it with conspiring groups of worldly-awakened men—Socialism sought to teach industry power, property its duty, and the working people how to struggle for their improvement without anger or impatience. It was Mr. Owen who was conspicuous in teaching them the golden lesson of peace and progress. His heart was with that religion which, though weak in creeds and collects, rendered humanity service. No affluence corrupted him. When he saw gentlemen of his acquaintance adding thousands to thousands and acre to acre, and giving themselves up to the pride of family, of title, of position, he himself plotted for the welfare of mechanics and labourers. He found no satisfaction in the splendour of courts so long as the hovel stood in sight. He felt as Mr. Bright did who had a mightier power of expressing the great aims which raise the stature of mankind, who said: "I do not care for military greatness or renown: I care for the condition of the people among whom I live. . . . Crown, coronet, mitres, military displays, pomp of war, wide colonies, and a huge empire are in my view all trifles light as air, unless with them you can have a fair share of comfort, contentment, and happiness among the great body of the people."

CHAPTER VI

HIS APPEAL TO THE PEOPLE

"There are some very earnest and benevolent persons who have nevertheless a hollow jingle in their goodness. They mistake their own indifference for impartiality, and call upon men to renounce for philanthropic purposes convictions which are as sincere, as salutary, and often more important to public freedom than philanthropy itself." —G. J. H.

It was the year 1825 which saw co-operative views—which since 1812 had been addressed by Mr. Owen to the upper classes—first taken up by the working class. In 1817, as the reader has already seen, he declared "all the religions of the world to be founded in error"; he alarmed the bishops and clergy, many of whom were in sympathy with his views, and had themselves intermittent compassion for the working class. For twenty-three years their wrath endured. In 1840 Mr. William Pare, one of the earliest and ablest of Mr. Owen's disciples, was compelled to resign the office he held of Registrar of births, deaths, and marriages in Birmingham, in consequence of its being made known to the Bishop of Exeter that Mr. Pare sympathised with Mr. Owen's views.

Many of Mr. Owen's difficulties with theologians arose through their not understanding him, and through Mr. Owen not understanding that they did not understand him. His followers were fond of quoting the lines:—

> "For modes of faith let graceless zealots fight,
> His can't be wrong whose life is in the right."

It is not at all clear that a man has a fair chance of getting

his life right while his creed is wrong. With all men creed has a great deal to do with conduct. Pope's lines are the doctrine of a latitudinarian without a conscience. But the argument of Pope imposed on Mr. Owen, as it has done on other excellent men. Mr. Owen was not himself indifferent to conviction. His own conviction about the religion of humanity was so strong that he paid no heed to any opinions which contradicted it. An innovator may point out the errors and mischiefs of a popular faith; but he can never command respect from adversaries unless he makes himself master of their case and does justice to the equal honesty of those sincerely opposed to him. Meaning nothing offensive by it, Owen often displayed the common insolence of philosophers—the insolence of pity. It is irritating and uninstructive to earnest men to be looked down upon with compassion on account of convictions acquired with anxiety and many sacrifices.

"It is not our object," at other times Owen used to say, "to attack that which is false, but to make clear that which is true. Explaining that which is true convinces the judgment when the mind possesses full and deliberate powers of judging." The creed of Co-operation was that the people should mean well, work well, secure to themselves the results of their labour, and neither beg, nor borrow, nor steal, nor annoy. Owen inconsistently denied men's responsibility for their belief, and then said the new system did not contravene religion. As religion was then understood it did.

In 1837 Mr. Owen, in his discussion with the Rev. J. H. Roebuck, at Manchester, said "he was compelled to believe that all the religions of the world were so many geographical insanities." It was foolishness in followers to represent, as did John Finch and Minter Morgan, that their views were those of "true Christianity." Their business was simply to contend that their views were morally true, and relevant to the needs or the day, and rest there. Neither to attack Christianity nor weakly attempt to reconcile social views to it would have been a self-defensive and self-respecting policy.

Mr. Owen's theory of the motives or conduct was one which could only commend itself to persons of considerable independence of thought—who were then a small minority.

To incite men to action he relied on four considerations, namely, that what he proposed was :—

1. True ; 2. Right ; 3. Humane ; 4. Useful.

It was understood very early[1] that Co-operation was proposed as a system of universal industry, equality of privileges, and the equal distribution of the new wealth created. This was an alarming programme to most persons, except the poor. Many did not like the prospects of "universal industry." The "distribution of wealth" in any sense did not at all meet the views of others, and "equality of privilege" was less valued.

Mr. Owen determined upon committing his schemes to the hands of the people, for whom he always cared, and sought to serve. Yet, politically, he was not well fitted to succeed with them. Cobden said Lord Palmerston had no prejudices—not even in favour of the truth. Mr. Owen had no political principles—not even in favour of liberty. His doctrine was that of the poet :—

> "For modes of government let fools contest,
> That which is best administered is best"

—a doctrine which has no other ideal than that of a benevolent despotism, and has no regard for the individual life and self-government of the people. Mr. Owen was no conscious agent of the adversaries of political rights. He simply did not think rights of any great consequence one way or the other. There never was any question among Liberal politicians as to the personal sincerity of Mr. Owen. Jeremy Bentham, James Mill, Francis Place were his personal friends, who were both social and political reformers, and valued Mr. Owen greatly in his own department, which was social alone.[2]

The French social reformers, from Fourier to Comte, have held the same treacherous tone with regard to political freedom. Albert Brisbane, who published the "Social Destiny of Man,"

[1] *Co-operative Miscellany*, No. 2, 1830.

[2] In his account of the Shakers in the *Economist* of June 2, 1821, Mr. Mudie said, "They never meddle with public affairs—not even voting at an election," and described as "a few singularities" this base abandonment of the country to whomsoever might bestride it—to patriots who might care for it, or knaves who might despoil it of honour or freedom, while the unheeding Shakers took care of their petty conscience and comfort.

himself a determined Fourierite, announced on his title-page, "Our evils are social not political"—giving a clean bill of health to all the knaves who by political machination diverted or appropriated the resources of the people. "Our most enlightened men," he contemptuously wrote, "are seeking in paltry political measures and administrative reforms for means of doing away with social misery." Tamisier more wisely wrote when he said, "Political order has alone been the object of study, while the industrial order has been neglected." Because social life had been neglected for politics, it did not follow that political life was to be neglected for social. This was merely reaction, not sense.

Another dangerous distich then popular with social reformers was the well-known lines Tory Dr. Johnson put into a poem of Goldsmith :—

> "How small of all that human hearts endure
> That part which laws or kings can cause or cure."

Goldsmith knew nothing of political science. The cultivated, generous-hearted, sentimental piper was great in his way. He foresaw not England made lean and hungry by corn laws; or Ireland depopulated by iniquitous laws; or France enervated and cast into the dust by despotism; but social reformers of Mr. Owen's day had means of knowing better. It was not their ignorance so much as their ardour that misled them. The inspiration of a new and neglected subject was upon them, and they thought it destined to absorb and supersede every other. The error cost them the confidence of the best men of thought and action around them for many years.

Mr. Owen's own account of the way in which he sought to enlist the sympathies of the Tories of his time with his schemes is instructive. They were, as despotic rulers always are, ready to occupy the people with social ideas, in the hope that they will leave political affairs to them. How little the Conservatives were likely to give effect to views of sound education for the people, irrespective of religious or political opinion, we of to-day know very well.

"I have," says Mr. Owen, "attempted two decisive measures for the general improvement of the population.

The one was a good and liberal education for all the poor, without exception on account of their religious or political principles; to be conducted under a board of sixteen commissioners, to be chosen by Parliament, eight to be of the Church of England and the remainder from the other sects, in proportion to their numbers, the education to be useful and liberal. This measure was supported, and greatly desired, by the members of Lord Liverpool's administration; and considerable progress was made in the preliminary measures previous to its being brought into Parliament. It was very generally supported by leading members of the aristocracy. It was opposed, however, and, after some deliberation, stopped in its progress by Dr. Randolph, Bishop of London, and by Mr. Whitbread. But the Archbishop of Canterbury, and several other dignitaries of the Church, were favourable to it. The declared opposition, however, of the Bishop of London and of Mr. Whitbread, who it was expected would prevail upon his party to oppose the measure, induced Lord Liverpool and his friends—who, I believe, sincerely wished to give the people a useful and liberal education—to defer the subject to a more favourable opportunity.

"The next measure was to promote the amelioration of the condition of the productive classes by the adoption of superior arrangements to instruct and employ them. I had several interviews with Lord Liverpool, Mr. Canning, and other members of the Government, to explain to them the outlines of the practical measures which I proposed. They referred the examination of the more detailed measures to Lord Sidmouth, the Secretary of State for the Home Department, and I had many interviews and communications with him upon these subjects.

"I became satisfied that if they had possessed sufficient power over public opinion they would have adopted measures to prevent the population from experiencing poverty and misery; but they were opposed by the then powerful party of the political economists.

"The principles which I have long advocated were submitted for their consideration, and at their request they were at first printed but not published. They were sent, by the permission of the Government, to all the Governments of

Europe and America; and upon examination by statesmen and learned men of the Continent were found to contain no evil, but simple facts and legitimate deductions. In one of my last interviews with Lord Sidmouth, he said: 'Mr. Owen, I am authorised by the Government to state to you that we admit the principles you advocate to be true, and that if they were fairly applied to practice they would be most beneficial; but we find the public do not yet understand them, and they are therefore not prepared to act upon them. When public opinion shall be sufficiently enlightened to comprehend and to act upon them we shall be ready and willing to acknowledge their truth and to act in conformity with them. We know we are acting upon erroneous principles; but we are compelled to do so from the force of public opinion, which is so strongly in favour of old-established political institutions.' To a statement so candid I could only reply, 'Then it becomes my duty to endeavour to enlighten the people and to create a new public opinion.'"[1] If Lord Sidmouth believed what he said, in the sense in which Mr. Owen understood him, he dexterously concealed, in all his public acts and speeches, his convictions from the world.

It was happily no easy thing even for Mr. Owen to win the confidence of the working-class politicians. They honourably refused to barter freedom for comfort, much as they needed an increase of physical benefits. We had lately a curiously-devised Social and Conservative Confederation, the work of Mr. Scott-Russell, in which the great leaders of the party always opposed to political amelioration were to lead the working class to the attainment of great social advantages, and put them "out in the open," as Sir John Packington said, in some wonderful way. Several well-known working-class leaders, some of whom did not understand what political conviction implied, and others who believed they could accept this advance without political compromise, entered into it. There were others, as Robert Applegarth, who felt that it was futile to put their trust in political adversaries to carry out their social schemes and then vote against them at elections, and so deprive their chosen friends of the power of serving them. Twelve

[1] *British Co-operator*, p. 154.

names of noblemen, the chief Conservatives in office, were given as ready to act as the leaders of the new party. Mr. Robert Applegarth caused the names to be published, when every one of them wrote to the papers, denying any authority for connecting them with the project.

Mr. Owen's early followers were looked upon with distrust by the Radical party, although he numbered among his active disciples invincible adherents of that school; but they saw in Mr. Owen's views a means of realising social benefits in which they, though Radicals, were also interested. Mr. Owen looked on Radicals and Conservatives alike as instruments of realising his views. He appealed to both parties in Parliament with the same confidence to place their names upon his committee. He went one day with Mrs. Fry to see the prisoners in Newgate. The boys were mustered at Mrs. Fry's request for his inspection. Mr. Owen published in the newspapers what he thought of the sight he beheld. He exclaimed: "A collection of boys and youths, with scarcely the appearance of human beings in their countenances; the most evident sign that the Government to which they belong had not performed any part of its duty towards them. For instance: there was one boy, only sixteen years of age, double ironed! Here a great crime had been committed and a severe punishment is inflicted, which under a system of proper training and prevention would not have taken place. My Lord Sidmouth will forgive me, for he knows I intend no personal offence. His dispositions are known to be mild and amiable[1]; but the chief civil magistrate of the country, in such case, is far more guilty than the boy; and in strict justice, if a system of coercion and punishment be rational and necessary, he ought rather to have been double ironed and in the place of the juvenile prisoner."

When Mr. Owen applied personally to Lord Liverpool, then Prime Minister, for permission to place his name with the leading names of members of the Opposition, to investigate his communistic plans, Lord Liverpool answered: "Mr. Owen, you have liberty to do so. You may make use of our names in any way you choose for the objects you have in view, short of committing us as an administration." The

[1] Had this been true, his name would not have been hateful to this day.

next day Mr. Owen held a public meeting. "I proposed," Mr. Owen has related, "that these important subjects should be submitted for consideration to the leading members of the administration and of the Opposition; and for several hours it was the evident wish of three-fourths of the meeting that this question should be carried in the affirmative. But as it was supposed by the Radical reformers of that day that I was acting for and with the ministry, they collected all their strength to oppose my measures; and finding they were greatly in the minority, they determined to prolong the meeting by opposing speeches, until the patience of the friends of the measure should be worn out. Accordingly, the late Major Cartwright, Mr. Alderman Waithman, Mr. Hunt, Mr. Hone, and others, spoke against time, until the principal parties retired, and until my misguided opponents could bring up their numerous supporters among the working classes, who were expected to arrive after they had finished their daily occupations; and at a late hour in the day the room became occupied by many of the friends and supporters of those gentlemen, who well knew how to obtain their object at public meetings by throwing it into confusion."[1] The wonderful committee Mr. Owen proposed comprised all the chief public men of the day, who never had acted together on any question, and unless the millennium had really arrived—of which there was no evidence before the meeting—it was not likely that they would. This was the resolution submitted to the meeting: "That the following noblemen and gentlemen be appointed on the committee, with power to add to their number:—

The First Lord of the Treasury.
The Lord Chancellor.
Sir Robert Peel, the Secretary of State.
Sir George Murray.
Sir Henry Hardinge.
The Chancellor of the Exchequer.
The Attorney and Solicitor General.
The Master of the Mint.
The Secretary of War.
The President of the Board of Trade.
The First Lord of the Admiralty.
The Duke of Sussex.
The Duke of Richmond.
The Earl of Winchelsea.
The Earl of Harewood.
The Marquis of Lansdowne.
Lords Grosvenor and Holland.
Lord Eldon.
Lord Sidmouth.
Lord Radnor.
Lord Carnarvon.
The Archbishops of Canterbury and [York.
The Bishops of London and Peterborough.

[1] *British Co-operator*, p. 152.

Deans of Westminster and York.
Cardinal Wild and Dr. Croly.
William Allen and Joseph Foster.
Mr. Rothschild and Mr. J. L. Goldsmid.
Lord Althorp.
Mr. Brougham.
Sir J. Graham.
Sir Henry Parnell.
Mr. Spring Rice.
Lord John Russell.
Sir John Newport.
Sir James Mackintosh.
Mr. Denman.
Mr. Alexander Baring.
Mr. Hume.
Mr. O'Connell.
Mr. Charles Grant.
Mr. Wilmot Horton.
Mr. Huskisson.
Lord Palmerston.
Mr. J. Smith.
Lord Nugent.
The Hon. G. Stanley.
Lord Milton.
Sir R. Inglish.
Sir Francis Burdett.
Mr. William Smith.
Mr. Warburton.
Mr. Hobhouse.
Dr. Birkbeck.
Mr. Owen."

There was this merit belonging to the proposal, that such an amazing committee was never thought possible by any other human being than Mr. Owen. Ministers were to forsake the Cabinet Councils, prelates the Church, judges the courts; the business of army, navy, and Parliament was to be suspended, while men who did not know each other, and who not only had no principles in common, but did not want to have, sat down with heretics, revolutionists, and Quakers, to confer as to the adoption of a system by which they were all to be superseded. It was quite needless in Major Cartwright and Alderman Waithman to oppose the mad motion, such a committee would never have met.

Mr. Owen was never diverted, but went on with his appeal to the people. He had the distinction of being the gentleman of his time who had earned great wealth by his own industry, and yet spent it without stint in the service of the public. It is amusing to see the reverence with which the sons of equality regarded him because he was rich. His name was printed in publications with all the distinction of italics and capitals as the *Great Philanthropist* OWEN; and there are disciples of his who long regarded the greatness of Co-operation as a tame, timid, and lingering introduction to the system of the great master whom they still cite as a sort of sacred name. It was a very subdued way of speaking of him to find him described as the "Benevolent Founder of our Social Views."

Long years after he had "retired from public life" his activity far exceeded that of most people who were in it, as a few dates of Mr. Owen's movements will show. On

July 10, 1838, he left London for Wisbech. On the three next nights he lectured in Lynn, the two following nights in Peterborough. On the next night at Wisbech again. The next night he was again in Peterborough, where, after a late discussion, he left at midnight with Mr. James Hill, the editor of the *Star in the East*, in an open carriage, which did not arrive at Wisbeach till half-past two. He was up before five o'clock the same morning, left before six for Lynn, to catch the coach for Norwich at eight. After seeing deputations from Yarmouth he lectured in St. Andrew's Hall at night and the following night, and lectured five nights more in succession at March, Wisbech, and Boston. It was his activity and his ready expenditure which gave ascendancy to the social agitation, both in England and America, from 1820 to 1844.

Robert Owen died in his 88th year, on the 17th of November, 1858, at Newtown, Montgomeryshire—the place of his birth. His wish was to die in the house and in the bedroom in which he was born. But Mr. David Thomas, the occupant of the house, was unable so to arrange. Mr. Owen went to the Bear's Head Hotel, quite near, and since rebuilt. He was buried in the grave of his father in the spacious ground of the Church of St. Mary. Mr. David Thomas and Mr. James Digby walked at the head of the bearers. The mourners were :—

Mr. George Owen Davies.
Mr. William Cox.
Mr. W. H. Ashurst.
Mr. Edward Truelove.
Mr. Francis Pears.
Mr. William Jones.
Mr. George Goodwin.
Mr. Robert Dale Owen.
Mr. William Pare.
Col. H. Clinton.
Mr. G. J. Holyoake.
Mr. Robert Cooper.
Mr. Law.
Mr. Pryce Jones.

There was quite an honouring procession—the Rev. John Edwards, M.A., who read the burial service, medical gentlemen, magistrates, Mr. Owen's literary executors, deputations of three local societies, and, very appropriately, twelve infant school children—seeing that Mr. Owen was the founder of infant schools.

After the funeral, Mr. Robert Dale Owen came into the hall of the "Bear's Head" with a parting gift to me of the Life

of his father, in which he had inscribed his name and mine. While paying my account at the office window, I placed them on a table near me, but on turning to enter the London coach with other visitors I found the books were gone. Though I at once made known my loss, nothing more was heard of them until forty-four years later, July 24, 1902,[1] when a large delegation of co-operators from England and Scotland assembled to witness the unveiling of the handsome screen erected by them, to surround the tomb of Mr. Owen, on which occasion I delivered the following address :—

We come *not* "to bury Cæsar"—but to praise him. It is now recorded in historic pages that "Robert Owen was the most conspicuous figure in the early part of the last century."[2] We are here at the commencement of another century to make the *first* commemoration that national gratitude has accorded him.

Being the last of the "Social Missionaries" appointed in 1841 to advocate Mr. Owen's famous "New Views of Society," and being the only survivor of his disciples who, forty-four years ago, laid his honoured bones in the grave before us, the distinction has been accorded to me of unveiling this Memorial. As the contemporaries of a public man are the best witnesses of his influence, or his eminence, we may recall that Southey described him as "one of the three great moral forces" of his day. There is a rarity in that praise, for there are still a hundred men of force to one of "moral" force.

Do we meet here to crown the career of a man unremarkable in the kingdom of thought, or without the genius of success? It is for us to answer these questions. It is said by parrot-minded critics that Owen was "a man of *one* idea," whereas he was a man of more ideas than any public man England knew in his day. He shared and befriended every new conception of moment and promise, in science, in education, and government. His mind was hospitable to all projects

[1] The mistress of a shop in Newtown where pledges were taken in, hearing my name among the arrivals, and remembering she had seen it on the title-page of a book in her possession, kindly sent me word that she would have pleasure in restoring it to me, which she did.

[2] "Robert Owen," by Leslie Stephen, *Nat. Dict. Biog.*



THE OWEN MEMORIAL AT NEWTOWN.

Unveiled by Mr. Holyoake, July 12th, 1902.

[*To face p.* 64.

of progress ; and he himself contributed more original ideas for the conduct of public affairs than any other thinker of his generation. It was not the opulence of his philanthropy, but the versatility of his ideas and interests, which led members of our Royal Family to preside at public meetings for him, brought monarchs to his table, and gave him the friendship of statesmen, of men of science and philosophy, throughout Europe and America. No other man ever knew so many contemporaries of renown.

Because some of his projects were so far reaching that they required a century to mature them, onlookers who expected them to be perfected at once, say he "failed in whatever he proposed." While the truth is he succeeded in more things than any other man ever undertook. If he made more promises than he fulfilled, he fulfilled more than any other public man ever made. Thus, he was not a man of "one idea" but of many. Nor did his projects fail. The only social community for which he was responsible was that of New Harmony, in Indiana ; which broke up through his too great trust in uneducated humanity—a fault which only the generous commit. The communities of Motherwell and Orbiston, of Manea, Fen, and Queenwood in Hampshire were all undertaken without his authority, and despite his warning of the inadequacy of the means for success. They failed, as he predicted they would. Critics, skilled in coming to conclusions without knowing the facts, impute these failures to him.

The Labour Exchange was not Mr. Owen's idea, but he adopted it, and by doing so made it so successful that it was killed by the cupidity of those who coveted its profits. He maintained—when nobody believed it—that employers who did most for the welfare of their workpeople, would be the greatest gainers. Owen did so, and made a fortune by it. Was not that success ?

A co-operative store was a mere detail of his factory management. Now they overrun the world. Have they not succeeded ? We Co-operators can answer for that.

He bought and worked up the first bale of cotton imported into England, thus practically founding the foreign cotton trade. Will any one say that has not answered ?

He was the first to advocate that eight hours a day in the

workshop was best for industrial efficiency. The best employers in the land are now of that opinion. He did not fail there.

Who can tell the horrors of industry which children suffered in factories at the beginning of the last century? Were not the Factory Acts acts of mercy? The country owed them to Robert Owen's inspiration. They saved the whole race of workers from physical deterioration. Were these Acts failures? Millions of children have passed through factories since Owen's day, who, if they knew it (and their parents, too) have reason to bless his name.

He was the first who looked with practical intent into the kingdom of the unborn. He saw that posterity—the silent but inevitable master of us all—if left untrained may efface the triumphs, or dishonour, or destroy the great traditions of our race. He put infant schools into the mind of the world. Have they been failures?

He, when it seemed impossible to any one else, proposed national education for which now all the sects contend. Has that proposal been a failure? In 1871, when the centenary of Owen's birth came round, we asked Prof. Huxley to take the chair. He wrote, in the midst of the struggle for the School Board Bill, saying: "It is my duty to take part in the attempt which the country is now making, to carry into effect some of Robert Owen's most ardently-cherished schemes. I think that every one who is compelled to look closely into the problem of popular education must be led to Owen's conclusions that the infants' school is, so to speak, the key of the position. Robert Owen," Huxley says, "discerned this great fact, and had the courage and patience to work out his theory into a practical reality. That" (Huxley declares) "is his claim—if he had no other—to the enduring gratitude of the people."

Huxley knew that Owen was not a sentimental, speculative, or barren reformer. He was for submitting every plan to experiment before advising it. He carried no dagger in his mouth, as many reformers have done. He cared for no cause that reason could not win. There never was a more cautious innovator, a more practical dreamer, or a more reasoning revolutionist.

Whatever he commended he supported with his purse. It was this that won for him confidence and trust, given to no

compeer of his time. When 80,000 working men marched from Copenhagen Fields to petition the Government to release the Dorchester labourers, it was Mr. Owen they asked to go with them at their head.

It was he who first taught the people the then strange truth that Causation was the law of nature on the mind, and unless we looked for the cause of an evil we might never know the remedy. Every man of sense in Church and State acts on this truth now, but so few knew it in Owen's day that he was accused of unsettling the morality of the world. It was the fertility and newness of his suggestions, as a man of affairs, that gave him renown, and his influence extends to us. This Memorial before us would itself grow old were we to stay to describe all the ideas the world has accepted from Owen. I will name but one more, and that the greatest.

He saw, as no man before him did, that environment is the maker of men. Aristotle, whose praise is in all our Universities, said "Character is Destiny." But how can character be made? The only national way known in Owen's day was by prayer and precept. Owen said there were material means, largely unused, conducive to human improvement. Browning's prayer was—"Make no more giants, God; but elevate the race at once." This was Owen's aim, as far as human means might do it. Great change can only be effected by unity. But—

> "Union without knowledge is useless;
> Knowledge without union is powerless."

Then what is the right knowledge? Owen said it consisted in knowing that people came into the world without any intention of doing it; and often with limited capacities, and with disadvantages of person, and with instinctive tendencies which impel them against their will, disqualifications which they did not give themselves. He was the first philosopher who changed repugnance into compassion, and taught us to treat defects of others with sympathy instead of contempt, and to remedy their deficiency, as far as we can, by creating for them amending conditions. Dislike dies in the heart of those who understand this, and the spirit of unity arises. Thus instructed good-will becomes the hand-maid of Co-operation, and Co-operation is the only available power of industry. Since error arises

more from ignorance of facts than from defect of goodness, the reformer with education at command, knows no despair of the betterment of men. This was the angerless philosophy of Owen, which inspired him with a forbearance that never failed him, and gave him that regnant manner which charmed all who met him. We shall see what his doctrine of environment has done for society, if we notice what it began to do in his day, and what it has done since.

Men perished by battle, by tempest, by pestilence. Faith might comfort, but it did not save them. In every town nests of pestilence coexisted with the Churches, which were concerned alone with worship. Disease was unchecked by devotion. Then Owen asked, "Might not safety come by improved material condition?" As the prayer of hope brought no reply, as the scream of agony, if heard, was unanswered, as the priest, with the holiest intent, brought no deliverance, it seemed prudent to try the philosopher and the physician.

Then Corn Laws were repealed, because prayers fed nobody. Then parks were multiplied, because fresh air was found to be a condition of health. Alleys and courts were first abolished, since deadly diseases were bred there. Streets were widened, that towns might be ventilated. Hours of labour were shortened, since exhaustion means liability to epidemic contagion. Recreation was encouraged, as change and rest mean life and strength. Temperance—thought of as self-denial—was found to be a necessity, as excess of any kind in diet, or labour, or pleasure means premature death. Those who took dwellings began to look, not only to drainage and ventilation, but to the ways of their near neighbours, as the most pious family may poison the air you breathe unless they have sanitary habits.

Thus, thanks to the doctrine of national environment which Owen was the first to preach—Knowledge is greater; Life is longer; Health is surer; Disease is limited; Towns are sweeter; Hours of labour are shorter; Men are stronger; Women are fairer; Children are happier; Industry is held in more honour, and is better rewarded; Co-operation carries wholesome food and increased income into a million homes where they were unknown before, and has brought us nearer and nearer to that state of society which Owen strove to create—in which it shall

be impossible for men to be depraved or poor. Thus we justify ourselves for erecting this Memorial to his memory, which I am about to unveil.

The town has erected a Public Library opposite the house in which Mr. Owen was born, to which the Co-operators subscribed £1,000. One part of the Library bears the name of Owen's Wing.

CHAPTER VII

THE ENTHUSIASTIC PERIOD. 1820–1830

> "Then felt I like some watcher of the skies,
> When a new planet swims into his ken;
> Or like stout Cortez, when with eagle eyes
> He stared on the Pacific; and his men
> Look'd at each other with a wild surmise,
> Silent upon a peak in Darien."—KEATS.

THE enchanted wonder which Keats describes on first finding in Chapman's Homer the vigorous Greek texture of the great bard, was akin to that "wild surmise" with which the despairing sons of industry first gazed on that new world of Co-operation then made clear to their view.

To the social reformers the world itself seemed moving in the direction of social colonies. Not only was America under way for the millennium of co-operative life—even prosaic, calculating, utilitarian Scotland was setting sail. France had put out to sea years before under Commander Fourier. A letter arrived from Brussels, bearing date October 2, 1825, addressed to the "Gentlemen of the London Co-operative Society," telling them that the Permanent Committee of the Society of Beneficence had colonial establishments at Wortzel and at Murxplus Ryckewvorsel, in the province of Antwerp, where 725 farmhouses were already built; that 76 were inhabited by free colonists; and that they had a contract with the Government for the suppression of mendicants, and had already 455 of those interesting creatures collected from the various regions of beggardom in a depôt, where 1,000 could be accommodated. No wonder there was exultation in Red Lion Square when the slow-moving, dreamy-eyed, much-smoking Dutch were spreading their old-fashioned canvas in

search of the new world. From 1820 to 1830 Co-operation and communities were regarded by the thinking classes as a religion of industry. Communities, the form which the religion of industry was to take, were from 1825 to 1830 as common and almost as frequently announced as joint-stock companies now. In 1826 April brought news that proposals were issued for establishing a community near Exeter—to be called the Devon and Exeter Co-operative Society. Gentlemen of good family and local repute, who were not, as some are now, afraid to look at a community through one of Lord Rosse's long-range telescopes, gave open aid to the proposal. Two public meetings were held in May, at the Swan Tavern. The Hon. Lionel Dawson presided on both occasions. Such was the enthusiasm about the new system that more than four hundred persons were willing to come forward with sums of £5 to £10; one hundred others were prepared to take shares at £25 each; and two or three promised aid to the extent of £2,000. Meetings in favour of this project were held at Tiverton, and in the Mansion House, Bridgewater. The zeal was real and did not delay. In July the promoters bought thirty-seven acres of land within seven miles of Exeter. A gardener, a carpenter, a quarrier (there being a stone quarry on the estate), a drainer, a well-sinker, a clay temperer, and a moulder were at once set to work.

The Metropolitan Co-operative Society, not to be behind when the provinces were going forward, put forth a plan for establishing a community within fifty miles of London. Shares were taken up and £4,000 subscribed in 1826. There was a wise fear of prematurity of proceeding shown, and there was also an infatuation of confidence exhibited in many ways. However, the society soberly put out an advertisement to landowners, saying, "Wanted to rent, with a view to purchase, or on a long lease, from 500 to 2,000 acres of good land, in one or several contiguous farms; the distance from London not material if the offer is eligible." Information was to be sent to Mr. J. Corss, Red Lion Square. Four years earlier Scotland, a country not at all prone to Utopian projects not likely to pay, entertained the idea of community before Orbiston was named. The *Economist* announced that the subscriptions for the formation of one of the new villages at

Motherwell, though the public had not been appealed to, amounted to £20,000.[1]

Eighteen hundred and twenty-six was a famous year for communistic projects. A Dublin Co-operative Society was formed on the 28th of February, at a meeting held at the Freemasons' Tavern, Dawson Street, Dublin. Captain O'Brien, R.N., occupied the chair. The Dublin Co-operative Society invited Lord Cloncurry to dine with them. His lordship wrote to say that he was more fully convinced than he was four years ago, of the great advantage it would be to Ireland to establish co-operative villages on Mr. Owen's plan, and spoke of Mr. Owen in curious terms as the "benevolent and highly-respectable Owen." This was nine years after Mr. Owen had astounded mankind by his London declaration "against all the religions of the world."[2]

Two years before the *Economist* appeared, as the first serial advocate of Co-operation, pamphleteers were in the field on behalf of social improvement. Mr. Owen certainly had the distinction of inspiring many writers. One "Philanthropos" published in 1819 a powerful pamphlet on the "Practicability of Mr. Owen's plan to improve the condition of the lower classes." It was inscribed to William Wilberforce (father of the Bishop of Winchester), whom the writer considered to be "intimately associated with every subject involving the welfare of mankind," and who "regarded political measures abstractedly from the individuals with whom they originated." Mr. Wilberforce, he said, had shown that "Christianity steps beyond the narrow bound of national advantage in quest of universal good, and does not prompt us to love our country at the expense of our integrity."[3]

The *Economist* was concluded in January, 1822. It was of the small magazine size, and was the neatest and most business-looking journal issued in connection with Co-operation for many years. After the 32nd number the quality and taste of the printing fell off—some irregularity in its issue occurred. Its conductor explained in the 51st number that its printing had been put into the hands of the Co-operative

[1] *Economist.* No. 27, July, 1821.
[2] *Co-operative Magazine,* 1826, p. 147.
[3] These were Bishop Watson's words adopted by "Philanthropos."

and Economical Society, "and that it would continue to be regularly executed by them." After the 52nd number the *Economist* was discontinued, without any explanation being given. It was bound in two volumes, and sold at 7s. each in boards. Many numbers purported to be "published every Saturday morning by Mr. Wright, bookseller, No. 46, Fleet Street, London, where the trade and newsmen may be supplied, and where orders, communications to the editor, post paid, are respectfully requested to be addressed." Early numbers bore the name of G. Auld, Greville Street. With No. 22 the names appear of J. and C. Adlard, Bartholomew Close. With No. 32 the imprint is "G. Mudie, printer"—no address. After No. 51 the intimation is—"Printed at the Central House of the Co-operative and Economical Society, No. 1, Guilford Street East, Spafields."

Twelve years later, when the *Gazette of the Exchange Bazaars* was started, a fly-leaf was issued, which stated, "This work will be conducted by the individual who founded the first of the co-operative societies in London, 1820, and who edited the *Economist*, in 1821–22, the *Political Economist and Universal Philanthropist*, in 1823, the *Advocate of the Working Classes*, in 1826–27; and who has besides lectured upon the principles to be discussed in the forthcoming publication (*The Exchange Bazaars Gazette*), in various parts of Great Britain. He enters on his undertaking, therefore, after having been prepared for his task by previous and long-continued researches." Mr. Owen never thought much of co-operative societies, regarding grocers' shops as ignominious substitutes for the reconstruction of the world.

The dedication of the *Economist* was as follows:—

"To Mr. John Maxwell, Lord Archibald Hamilton, Sir William de Crespigny, Bart., Mr. Dawson, Mr. Henry Brougham, Mr. H. Gurney, and Mr. William Smith, the philanthropic members of the House of Commons, who, on the motion of Mr. Maxwell, on the 26th of June, 1821, for an address to the throne, praying that a commission might be appointed to investigate Mr. Owen's system, had the courage and consistency to make the motion; this volume is inscribed in testimony of heartfelt respect and gratitude by THE ECONOMIST."

The earliest name of literary note connected with Co-operation was that of Mr. William Thompson. He was an abler man than John Gray. Though an Irishman, he was singularly dispassionate. He possessed fortune and studious habits. He resided some years with Jeremy Bentham, and the methodical arrangement of his chief work, the "Distribution of Wealth," betrays Bentham's literary influence. This work was written in 1822. In 1825 he published "An Appeal of one-half the human race—Women—against the pretensions of the other half—Men." It was a reply to James Mill—to a paragraph in his famous "Article on Government." Mr. Thompson issued, in 1827, "Labour Rewarded," in which he explained the possibility of conciliating the claims of labour and capital and securing to workmen the "whole products of their exertions." This last work consisted of business-like "Directions for the Establishment of Co-operative Communities." These "directions" were accompanied by elaborate plans and tables. A moderate number of pioneers might, with that book in their hand, found a colony or begin a new world. He consulted personally Robert Owen, Mr. Hamilton (whom he speaks of as an authority), Abram Combe, and others who had had experience in community-making. Jeremy Bentham's wonderful constitutions, which he was accustomed to furnish to foreign states, were evidently in the mind of his disciple, Mr. Thompson, when he compiled this closely-printed octavo volume of nearly three hundred pages. He placed on his title-page a motto from *Le Producteur:* "The age of Gold, Happiness, which a blind credulity has placed in times past is before us." The world wanted to see the thing done. It desired, like Diogenes, to have motion proved. In practical directions for forming communities exhaustive instructions were precisely the things needed. Where every step was new and every combination unknown, Thompson wrote a book like a steam engine, marvellous in the scientific adjustments of its parts. His "Distribution of Wealth" is the best exposition to which reference can be made of the pacific and practical nature of English communism. He was a solid but far from a lively writer. It requires a sense of duty to read through his book—curiosity is not sufficient. Political economists in Thompson's day held, as Mr. Senior has expressed it,

that "It is not with *happiness* but with *wealth* that I am concerned as a political economist." Thompson's idea was "to inquire into the principles of the distribution of wealth *most conducive to human happiness*." His life was an answer to those who hold that Socialism implies sensualism. For the last twenty years of his life he neither partook of animal food nor intoxicating drinks, because he could better pursue his literary labours without them. He left his body for dissection—a bold thing to do in his time—a useful thing to do in order to break somewhat through the prejudices of the ignorant against dissection for surgical ends. Compliance with his wish nearly led to a riot among the peasantry of the neighbourhood of Clonnkeen, Rosscarbery, County of Cork, where he died.

Another early and memorable name in co-operative history is that of Abram Combe. It is very rarely that a person of any other nationality dominates the mind of a Scotchman; but Mr. Owen, although a Welshman, did this by Abram Combe, who, in 1823, published a small book named "Old and New Systems"—a work excelling in capital letters. This was one of Mr. Combe's earliest statements of his master's views, which he reproduced with the fidelity which Dumont showed to Bentham, but with less ability. There were three Combes—George, Abram, and Andrew. All were distinguished in their way, but George became the best known. George Combe was the phrenologist, who made a reputation by writing the "Constitution of Man," though he had borrowed without acknowledgment the conception from Gall and Spurzheim, especially Spurzheim, who had published an original little book on the "Laws of Human Nature"; but to George Combe belonged the merit which belonged to Archdeacon Paley with respect to the argument from design. Combe restated, animated, and enlarged into an impressive volume what before was fragmentary, slender, suggestive, but without the luminous force of illustrative facts and practical applications which Combe supplied. The second brother, Dr. Andrew Combe, had all the talent of the family for exposition, and his works upon physiology were the first in interest and popularity in their time; but Abram had more sentiment than both the others put together, and ultimately sacrificed himself as well

as his fortune in endeavours to realise the new social views in practice.

In 1824 Robert Dale Owen (Mr. Owen's eldest son) appeared as an author for the first time. His book was entitled "An Outline of the System of Education at New Lanark." It was published by Longman & Co., London, written at New Lanark, 1823. It was dedicated to his father. The author must have been a young man then.[1] Yet his book shows completeness of thought and that clear and graceful expression by which, beyond all co-operative writers, Robert Dale Owen was subsequently distinguished. His outline is better worth printing now than many books on New Lanark which have appeared; it gives so interesting a description of the construction of the schools, the methods and principles of tuition pursued. The subjects taught to the elder classes were the earth (its animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdoms), astronomy, geography, mathematics, zoology, botany, mineralogy, agriculture, manufactures, architecture, drawing, music, chemistry, and ancient and modern history. The little children were occupied with elementary education, military drill, and dancing, at which Mr. Owen's Quaker partners were much discomfited. The schoolrooms were picture galleries and museums. Learning ceased to be a task and a terror, and became a wonder and delight. The reader who thinks of the beggarly education given by this wealthy English nation will feel admiration of the princely mind of Robert Owen, who gave to the children of weavers this magnificent scheme of instruction. No manufacturer has arisen in England so great as he.

The London Co-operative Society was formally commenced in October, 1824. It occupied rooms in Burton Street, Burton Crescent. This quiet, and at that time pleasant and suburban, street was quite a nursery-ground of new-born principles. Then, as now, it had no carriage way at either end. In the house at the Tavistock Place corner, lived for many years James Pierrepoint Greaves, the famous mystic. As secluded Burton Street was too much out of the way for the convenience of large assemblages, the discussions commenced by the society

[1] His Autobiography, since published, states that his age was twenty-two, and that this was his first work.

there, were transferred to the Crown and Rolls Rooms, in Chancery Lane. Here overflowing audiences met—political economists seem to have been the principal opponents. Their chief argument against the new system, was the Malthusian doctrine against "the tendency of population to press against the means of subsistence."

In the month of April, 1825, the London Co-operative Society hired a first-floor in Picket Street, Temple Bar, for the private meetings of members, who were much increasing at that time. In November of the same year, 1825, the society took the house, No. 36, Red Lion Square. Mr. J. Corss was the Secretary. The London Co-operative Society held weekly debates. One constant topic was the position taken by Mr. Owen—that man is not properly the subject of praise or blame, reward or punishment. It also conducted bazaars for the sale of goods manufactured by the provincial societies.

At New Harmony, Indiana, David Dale Owen, writing to his father, related that they had had debates there, and Mary and Jane, daughters or daughter-in-laws of Mr. Owen, both addressed the meetings on several occasions. After all the discourses opportunity of discussion and questioning was uniformly and everywhere afforded.

The second serial journal representing Co-operation appeared in America, though its inspiration was English. It was the *New Harmony Gazette*. Its motto was: "If we cannot reconcile all opinions let us endeavour to unite all hearts."

The recommencement of a co-operative publication in England took place in 1826. The first was entitled the *Co-operative Magazine and Monthly Herald*, and appeared in January. It was "printed by Whiting and Branston, Beaufort House, Strand," and "published by Knight and Lacey, Watt's Head, Paternoster Row." It purported to be "sold by J. Templeman, 39, Tottenham Court Road; and also at the office of the London Co-operative Society, 36, Red Lion Square." The second number of this magazine was published by Hunt and Clark, Tavistock Street. A change in the publisher occurred very early, and additional agents were announced as J. Sutherland, Calton Street, Edinburgh; R. Griffin & Co., Hutchinson Street, Glasgow; J. Bolstead,

Cork; and A. M. Graham, College Green, Dublin. The third number announced a change in the Cork publisher; J. Loftus, of 107, Kirkpatrick Street, succeeded Mr. Bolstead, and a new store, the "Orbiston Store," was for the first time named.[1] The co-operative writers of this magazine were not wanting in candour even at their own expense. Mr. Charles Clark relates "that while one of the New Harmony philosophers was explaining to a stranger the beauties of a system which dispensed with rewards and punishments, he observed a boy who approved of the system busily helping himself to the finest plums in his garden. Forgetting his argument, he seized the nearest stick at hand and castigated the young thief in a very instructive manner."[2]

The worthy editor of the *Co-operative Magazine* was one of the fool friends of progress. In his first number he gravely reviews a grand plan of one James Hamilton, for rendering "Owenism Consistent with our Civil and Religious Institutions." His proposal is to begin the new world with one hundred tailors, who are to be unmarried and all of them handsome of person. Hamilton proposed to marry all the handsome tailors by ballot to a similar number of girls. After sermon and prayer the head partner and minister, assisted by foremen of committees, were to put the written names of the men in one box and those of the girls in another. The head partner was then to mix the male names and the minister the female names. When a man's name was proclaimed aloud, the minister was immediately to draw out the name of a girl from his box. The couple were then requested to consider themselves united by decision of heaven. By this economical arrangement young couples were saved all the anxiety of selection, loss of time in wooing, the suspense of soliciting the approval of parents or guardians. The distraction of courtship, sighs, tears, smiles, doubts, fears, jealousies, expectations, dis-

[1] I preserve the names and addresses of the earlier societies' printers and publishers. It is interesting to know the places where historic movements first commenced and the persons by whose aid, or enthusiasm, or courage the first publicity was given to them. Every part of London has been dotted with shops where they were printed and sold, with coffee-shops where they were discussed, and with printing offices where the struggling publications were carried to be printed when one house after another declined to print any more.

[2] Private Letter from New Harmony, 1825 (*Co-operative Magazine*, vol. i. No. 1, p. 50. 1826).

appointments, hope and despair were all avoided by this compendious arrangement. How any editor, not himself an out-patient of a lunatic asylum, could have occupied pages of the *Co-operative Magazine* by giving publicity to such a pamphlet more ineffably absurd than here depicted, it is idle to conjecture. Could this be the Mr. Hamilton, of Dalzell, who joined Mr. Abram Combe in the purchase of Orbiston for £20,000, and who offered to let lands at Motherwell for a community, and to guarantee the repayment of £40,000 to be expended on the erection of the buildings?

Apart from the eccentric views which we have recounted (if indeed they were his) Mr. Hamilton was distinguished for the great interest he took in co-operative progress and the munificence by which he assisted it. In the projected community of Motherwell he was joined by several eminent men, who had reason to believe that a large and well-supported co-operative colony might be made remunerative, besides affording to the Government of the day a practical example of what might be done. Several gentlemen in England subscribed many thousands each in furtherance of this project. Mr. Morrison, of the well-known firm of Morrison and Dillon, was one of those who put down his name for £5,000.

The *Co-operative Magazine* of 1826 was adorned by an engraving of Mr. Owen's quadrilateral community. The scenery around it was mountainous and tropical. The said scenery was intended to represent Indiana, where Mr. Owen had bought land with a view to introduce the new world in America. Mr. A. Brisbane prefixes to his translation of Fourier's "Destiny of Man" the Fourier conception of a phalanstere. Mr. Owen's design of a community greatly excelled the phalanstere in completeness and beauty. Mr. A. Combe exhibited designs of his Scotch community at Orbiston, but Mr. Owen had the most luxuriant imagination this way. Artists who came near him to execute commissions soon discovered that the materialist philosopher, as they imagined him, had no mean taste for the ideal.

Lamarck's theory of the "Origin of Species" was introduced into the *Co-operative Magazine*—a harmless subject certainly, but one that was theologically mischievous for forty years after. "Scripture Politics" was another topic with which

co-operators afflicted themselves. "Phrenology," another terror of the clergy, appeared. Discussions upon marriage followed, but, as the co-operators never contemplated anything but equal opportunities of divorce for rich and poor, the subject was irrelevant. The editor actually published articles on the "Unhappiness of the Higher Orders,"[1] and provided remedies for it, as though that was any business of theirs. It was time enough for readers to sigh over the griefs of the rich when they had secured the gladness of the poor.

In those days a practical agitator (Carlile), who had the courage to undergo long years of imprisonment to free the press, thought the world was to be put right by a science of "Somatopsychonoologia."[2] There were co-operators—Allen Davenport, the simple-hearted ardent advocate of agrarian views, among them—who were prepared to undertake this nine-syllabled study.

Every crotcheteer runs at the heels of new pioneers. Co-operative pages advocated the "Civil Rights of Women," to which they were inclined from a sense of justice; and the advocates of that question will find some interesting reading in co-operative literature. Their pages were open to protest against the game laws. The *Co-operative Magazine* gave almost as much space to the discussion of the ranunculus, the common buttercup, as it did to the "new system of society." The medical botanists very early got at the poor co-operators. A co-operative society was considered a sort of free market-place, where everybody could deposit specimens of his notions for inspection or sale.

In 1827, a gentleman who commanded great respect in his day, Mr. Julian Hibbert, printed a circular at his own press on behalf of the "Co-operative Fund Association." He avowed himself as "seriously devoted to the system of Mr. Owen": and Hibbert was a man who meant all he said and who knew how to say exactly what he meant. Here is one brief appeal by him to the people, remarkable for justness of thought and vigorous directness of language: "Would you be free? be worthy of freedom: mental liberty is the pledge of political

[1] *Co-operative Magazine*, No. III.

[2] A Greek compound, expressing a knowledge of body, soul, and mind.

liberty. Unlearn your false knowledge, and endeavour to obtain real knowledge. Look around you; compare all things; know your own dignity; correct your vicious habits; renounce superfluities; despise idleness, drunkenness, gambling, and fighting; guard against false friends; and learn to *think* (and if possible to *act*) independently." This language shows the rude materials out of which co-operators had sometimes to be made. In personal appearance Julian Hibbert strikingly resembled Shelley. He had at least the courage, the gentleness, and generosity of the poet. Hibbert had ample fortune, and was reputed one of the best Greek scholars of his day. Being called upon to give evidence on a trial in London, he honestly declined to take the oath on the ground that he did not believe in an Avenging God, and was therefore called an atheist, and was treated in a ruffianly manner by the eloquent and notorious Charles Phillips, who was not a man of delicate scruples himself, being afterwards accused of endeavouring to fix the guilt of murdering Lord William Russell upon an innocent man, after Couvoisier had confessed his guilt to him. Hibbert's courage and generosity was shown in many things. He visited Carlile when he was confined in Dorchester Gaol for heresy, and on learning that a political prisoner there had been visited by some friend of position who had give him £1,000, Hibbert at once said: "It shall not appear, Mr. Carlile, that you are less esteemed for vindicating the less popular liberty of conscience. I will give you £1,000." He gave Mr. Carlile the money there and then. It was Mr. Hibbert's desire in the event of his death that his body should be at the service of the Royal College of Surgeons, being another of those gentlemen who thought it useful by his own example to break down the prejudice of the poor, against their remains being in some cases serviceable to physiological science. This object was partly carried out in Mr. Hibbert's case by Mr. Baume. Some portion of Mr. Hibbert's fortune came into possession of Mrs. Captain Grenfell, a handsome wild Irish lady after the order of Lady Morgan. Mr. Hibbert's intentions, however, seem to have been pretty faithfully carried out, for thirty years after his death I was aware of five and ten pound notes occasionally percolating into the hands of one or other unfriended advocate of unpopular forms of social and

heretical liberty, who resembled the apostles at least in one respect—they had "neither purse nor scrip."

During 1827, and two years later, the *Co-operative Magazine* was issued as a sixpenny monthly. All the publications of this period, earlier and later, were advertised as being obtainable at 19, Greville Street, Hatton Garden, then a co-operative centre, and at co-operative stores in town and country. If all stores sold the publication then it proved that they better understood the value of special co-operative literature than many do now.

It was on May 1, 1828, that the first publication appeared entitled the *Co-operator*. It was a small paper of four pages only, issued monthly at one penny. It resembled a halfpenny two-leaved tract. The whole edition printed would hardly have cost thirty shillings if none were sold.[1] It was continued for twenty-six months, ceasing on August 1, 1830. The twenty-six numbers consisted of twenty-six papers, all written by the editor, Dr. King, who stated that they were concluded because "the object for which they were commenced had been attained. The principles of Co-operation had been disseminated among the working classes and made intelligible to them." This was not true twenty years later, but everybody was sanguine in those days, and saw the things which were not, more clearly than the things which were.[2] The chief cause of failure which the editor specifies as having overtaken some co-operative societies was defect in account keeping. Of course, as credit was customary in the early stores, accounts would be the weak point with workmen. Dr. King wrote to Lord (then Henry) Brougham, M.P., an account of the Brighton co-operators. Lord Brougham asked Mr. M. D. Hill to bring the matter of Co-operation before the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge. Timid members on the council were afraid of it, as many councils are still. It would have been one of the most memorable papers of that famous society had they treated this

[1] It bore as printer's name Sickelmore, Brighton, the last number (the first that bore any publisher's name) gave that of Taylor and Son, North Street, same town. It was always to be had at the Co-operative Bazaar, 19, Greville Street, Hatton Garden, London.

[2] One of the disciples of Fourier, on being told that organised life was impossible because it was too beautiful, answered: "It is too beautiful not to be possible."

subject. They never did treat any original subject, and this would have been one.

Mr. Craig, who had extensive personal knowledge of early societies, states that one was formed at Bradford in 1828. A stray number of the Brighton *Co-operator* (the one edited by Dr. King), soiled and worn, found its way into Halifax, and led to the formation of the first co-operative society there, owing to the foresight and devotion to social development of Mr. J. Nicholson, a name honourably known, and still remembered with respect, in Halifax. His son-in-law, Mr. David Crossley, of Brighouse, all his life manifested intelligent and untiring interest in Co-operation.

The first Birmingham co-operative rules were framed in 1828 by Mr. John Rabone, a well-known commercial name in that town, who was a frequent writer in early co-operative years. The reports of the early success of the Orbiston community reached Birmingham, and had great influence there. Some who had seen the place gave so good an account of it, that it was the immediate cause of the first Birmingham co-operative society being formed.

On January 1, 1829, the first number of the *Associate* was issued, price one penny, "published at the store of the first London Co-operative Trading Association, 2, Jerusalem Passage, Clerkenwell." The *Associate*, a well-chosen name, modestly stated that it was "put forth to ascertain how far the working class were disposed to listen to its suggestion of means by which they themselves may become the authors of a lasting and almost unlimited improvement of their own condition in life." The *Associate* was from the beginning a well-arranged, modest little periodical, and it was the first paper to summarise the rules of the various co-operative associations.

The author of "Paul Clifford" takes the editor of the *British Co-operator* by storm, who states that this work bids fair to raise Mr. Bulwer to that enviable pinnacle of fame which connects the genius of the author with the virtues of the citizen, the philanthropist with the profundity of the philosopher.[1]

The Society for the Promotion of Co-operative Knowledge

[1] *British Co-operator*, p. 62. 1829.

held regular quarterly meetings, commencing in 1829. They were reported with all the dignity of a co-operative parliament in the *Weekly Free Press*, a Radical paper of the period. The proceedings were reprinted in a separate form. This society bore the name of the British Association for Promoting Co-operative Knowledge first in 1830.

This publication, entitled *The Weekly Free Press*, was regarded as a prodigy of newspapers on the side of Co-operation. The editor of the aforesaid *British Co-operator* described it as "an adamantine bulwark, which no gainsayer dare run against without suffering irretrievable loss." No doubt "gainsayers" so warned, prudently kept aloof, but the "adamantine journal" ran down itself, suffering irretrievable loss in the process.

No one could accuse the early co-operators of being wanting in large ideas. It was coolly laid down, without any dismay at the magnitude of the undertaking, that the principles of Co-operation were intended to secure equality of privileges for all the human race. That is a task not yet completed.

In addition they made overtures to bring about the general elevation of the human race, together with univeral knowledge and happiness. Ten years before the British Association for the Advancement of Science was devised in Professor Phillips's Tea-room in the York Museum, and forty years before Dr. Hastings ventured to propose to Lord Brougham the establishment of a National Association for the Promotion of Social Science, the Co-operative Reformers set up, in 1829, a "British Association for Promoting Co-operative Knowledge." It had its quarterly meetings, some of which were held in the theatre of the Mechanics' Institution, Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane, London, known as Dr. Birkbeck's Institution. The speeches delivered were evidently studied and ambitious, far beyond the character of modern speeches on Co-operation, which are mostly businesslike, abrupt, and blunt. Among those at these early meetings were Mr. John Cleave, well known as a popular newsvendor—when only men of spirit dare be newsvendors—whose daughter subsequently married Mr. Henry Vincent, the eminent lecturer, who graduated in the fiery school of "Chartism," including imprisonment. Mr. William Lovett, a frequent speaker, was later in life

imprisoned with John Collins for two years in Warwick Gaol, where they devised, wrote, and afterwards published the best book on the organisation and education of the Chartist party ever issued from that body. Mr. Lovett made speeches in 1830 with that ornate swell in his sentences with which he wrote resolutions at the National Association, in High Holborn, twenty years later, when W. J. Fox delivered Sunday evening orations there. Mr. Lovett was the second secretary of the chief co-operative society in London, which met at 19, Greville Street, Hatton Garden.

The fourth report of the British Co-operative Association announced the *Liverpool*, *Norwich*, and *Leeds Mercuries*; the *Carlisle Journal*, the *Newry Telegraph*, the *Chester Courant*, the *Blackburn Gazette*, the *Halifax Chronicle*, besides others, as journals engaged in discussing Co-operation. The *Westmoreland Advertiser* is described as devoted to it.[1]

The first Westminster co-operative society, which met in the infant schoolroom, gave lectures on science. Mr. David Mallock, A.M., delivered a lecture on "Celestial Mechanics"; Mr. Dewhurst, a surgeon, lectured on "Anatomy," and complaint was made that he used Latin and Greek terms without translating them.[2] The *British Co-operator*, usually conducted with an editorial sense of responsibility, announced to its readers that "it is confidently said that Mr. Owen will hold a public meeting in the City of London Tavern, early in Easter week; and it is expected that his Royal Highness the Duke of Sussex will take the chair. We have no doubt it will be well attended and produce a great sensation among the people." This premature announcement was likely to deter the Duke from attending.

The first London co-operative community is reported as holding a meeting on the 22nd of April, 1829, at the Ship Coffee-house, Featherstone Street, City Road. Mr. Jennison spoke, who gave it as his conviction that the scheme could be carried out with £5 shares, payable at sixpence per week.[3]

The first Pimlico Association was formed in December, 1829. Its store was opened on the 27th of February, 1830,

[1] *British Co-operator*, p. 47. [2] Ibid., p. 20. 1829. [3] Ibid., p. 44.

and between that date and the 6th of May it had made £32 of net profit. Its total property amounted to £140. Its members were eighty-two.

The first Maidstone co-operative society was in force in 1830, and held its public meetings in the Britannia Inn, George Street. A Rev. Mr. Pope, of Tunbridge Wells, gave them disquietude by crying—"Away with such happiness [that promised by Co-operation] as is inconsistent with the gospel." As nobody else promised any happiness to the working men, Mr. Pope might as well have left them the consolation of hoping for it. He would have had his chance when they got the happiness, which yet lags on its tardy way.

In 1830 Mr. J. Jenkinson, "treasurer of the Kettering Co-operative Society," confirmed its existence by writing an ambitious paper upon the "Co-operative System."

England has never seen so many co-operative papers as 1830 saw. Since the *Social Economist* was transferred to the promoters of the Manchester *Co-operative News* Company, in 1869, there has been even in London no professed co-operative journal.

The *Agricultural Economist*, representing the Agricultural and Horticultural Association, is the most important-looking journal which has appeared in London in the interests of Co-operation—"Associative Topics" formed a department in this paper.

In 1830, when the *Co-operative Magazine* was four years old, the *Co-operative Miscellany* (also a monthly magazine) commenced, and with many defects, had more popular life in it than any other. The editor was, I believe, the printer of his paper. Anyhow, he meant putting things to rights with a vigorous hand. His *Miscellany* afterwards described itself as a "Magazine of Useful Knowledge"; a sub-title, borrowed, apparently, from the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, then making a noise in the world. The editor of this *Miscellany* held that co-operative knowledge should be placed first in the species useful. It was then a novel order of knowledge. The *Miscellany* was of the octavo size; the typographical getting-up was of the provincial kind, and the title-page had the appearance of a small window-bill. It was

printed by W. Hill, of Bank Street, Maidstone. The editor professed that his magazine contained a development of the principles of the system. The allusion evidently was to Mr. Owen's system. Of the people he says "many of them are beginning to feel the spark of British independence to glow." He tells us that some "are moving onwards towards the diffusion of the views of Mr. Owen, of New Lanark, now generally known as the principles of Co-operation.

Speaking of the meeting of the British Co-operative Association, at which Mr. Owen spoke, "who was received with enthusiastic and long-continued cheering," the editor of the *Co-operative Miscellany*, said: "The theatre was filled with persons of an encouraging and respectable appearance." Persons of an "encouraging appearance" are surely one of the daintiest discoveries of enthusiasm.

At this time Mr. Owen held Sunday morning lectures in the Mechanics' Institution, followed, says this *Miscellany* "by a conversazione at half-past three o'clock, and a lecture in the evening."

Early in 1830 appeared, in magazine form, the *British Co-operator*, calling itself also "A Record and Review of Co-operative and Entertaining Knowledge." This publication made itself a business organ of the movement, and addressed itself to the task of organising it. To the early stores it furnished valuable advice, and the sixth number "became a sort of text-book to co-operators." No. 22 had an article which professed to be "from the pen of a gentleman holding an important office in the State," and suggested that intending co-operators should bethink themselves of bespeaking the countenance of some patron in the infancy of their Co-operation—the clergyman of the parish, or a resident magistrate, who might give them weights and scales and a few shelves for their store shop. The members were to sign an arbitration bond, under which *all* questions of property in the society shall be finally decided by the patron, who must not be removable, otherwise than by his own consent. The plan might have led to the extension of Co-operation in rural districts. And as the authority of the patron was merely to extend to questions of property when no law existed for its protection, the members would have had their own way in

social regulations. All the patron could have done would have been to take away his scales, weights, and shelves. A very small fund, when the society was once fairly established, would have enabled them to have purchased or replaced these things. The British Association for Promoting Co-operative Knowledge, published in the *Weekly Free Press* a special protest against "patrons of any sort, especially the clergyman or the magistrate." The early socialists spoke with two voices. With one they denounced the wealthier classes as standing aloof from the people and lending them no kind of help, and with the other described them as coming forward with "insidious plans" of interference with them. It was quite wise to counsel the working classes "to look to themselves and be their own patrons," but it was not an encouraging thing to gentlemen to see one of their order "holding an important office in the State," kicked, "by order of the committee," for coming forward with what was, for all they knew, a well-meant suggestion.

The *British Co-operator* prepared articles for the guidance of trustees and directors or committees of co-operative societies. It gave them directions how to make their storekeeper a responsible and punishable person. How to procure licences. How to execute orders and schemes of book-keeping. It usefully remarked: "We regret that the neglect of the first Bloomsbury society to take legal measures to secure their property has deprived them of the power to recover their trading stock from four of the members, one of whom was *nominally* a trustee. The parties entered the store at night, and decamped with all the movables they could carry off. This has broken up the society. We still repeat, the *trustees* of a society *ought not* to be members of it."[1] Mr. Haigh, of Mill's Bridge Society, Huddersfield, wrote to inform the editor, that on the 14th ultimo "they were obliged to discharge their *storekeeper*, as he had defrauded them of much property during the quarter"—a circumstance which subsequently occurred very frequently in that district. Some of the stores appear to have been troubled by the disappearance

[1] The reason being, that if he were a member the law would then regard him as a partner, who might, as such, appropriate the funds to his own use. The law is changed now.

of cheese in larger proportions than the sales accounted for, and an announcement was made of the formation of a Mouse-trap Committee.

It was a law in England that no partner should sue his co-partner for any fraud or breach of agreement by an action at common law; his only mode of proceeding against his partner was to file a bill in equity in the Court of Chancery. This mode of proceeding against any member of a co-operative trading society, from the immense expense attached to it (for £60 would only meet the cost of filing the bill), was rendered impossible for a working man to adopt. Therefore it was better for him to pocket the first loss sustained rather than throw two or three years' hard-earned savings into the engulfing jaw of a Chancery suit.

A discussion arose upon "Educated Shopmen" in the *British Co-operator* where it was proposed that the storekeeper should be "a person of gainly appearance—clean, active, obliging, and possessing a high sense of honour." Mr. Faber, contended that the storekeeper ought not to be regarded "as a servant only, but as a friend and brother of the associates."

Efforts were then being made in London to establish an agency for the sale of co-operative manufactures. In 1830 the distressed co-operators of Spitalfields and Bethnal Green weavers produced a co-operative silk handkerchief. It was an article that only ladies and gentlemen would buy in sufficient numbers to be of any advantage; but the disastrous proneness of enthusiasm to be instant in season and out of season, led to there appearing upon it a design representing the inordinate possessions of the upper classes, so that no gentleman could use it without seeing the reproach.

The House of Commons published a paper detailing the attempts happily being made to put down Hindoo suttees. The *British Co-operator* writes upon it thus: "Mr. Owen is right in saying that the period of a great moral change which he has announced, is fast approaching. There is scarcely a publication which issues from the press that does not bring forward some new evidence of it." The co-operators at this period believed in the immediate advent of Mr. Owen's system as implicitly as the early Christians believed in the

coming of Christ, and every new and hopeful incident of the day was regarded as a shadow, cast by the new world before it.

Dr. Epps[1] and his system of phrenology, semi-Christian and semi-materialistic, is introduced in the *British Co-operator*, and Dr. Henry McCormac, of Belfast—described as "one of the illuminati of the age"—is noticed as the author of a work on the moral and physical condition of the working class. Dr. McCormac was a promoter of social as well as medical ideas, and was known as a teacher of mark. His son, a well-known physician, was the author of similar works. Dr. Epps, a leader in homœopathy when it was ill-regarded, took a sincere interest in advancing liberal opinion. In the *British Co-operator* a co-operative catechism was published, in the form of a dialogue between one Tom Seekout and Jack Tellall, a co-operator.

After nine numbers had been published of the *Associate*, which bore no date save that of London, 1830, by which its times of appearance could be told, it took the second title of *Co-operative Mirror*. The tenth number reproduced the catechism with pictorial embellishments, quite of the Catnach order of art, representing Tom Seekout, a dilapidated rascal, who wore breeches and stockings with holes in them, smoked a pipe, had a battered hat, and was very thin. He is shown as coming out of the "Pipe and Puncheon" public-house, a far less dismal place, it must be owned, than the drawing of the co-operative stores opposite—a plain-looking, solid, rather dreary house, bearing the name "Co-operative Society" over the door. Before this stands a smiling, well-contented-looking fellow, in good health and compendious whiskers, which are apparently the product of the store, as poor Tom Seekout has none. Jack Tellall, the co-operator wears a hat with a brim of copious curvature, a coat evidently cut by some Poole of the period, voluminous white trousers, and a watch and seals that would be sure to have excited Mr. Fagin. In the distance, between the "Pipe and Puncheon" and the "Co-operative Society," is a remarkable church, very much given to steeple. The pathway to it is entirely devoid of travellers; but it is quite evident that Jack Tellall, like a well-behaved co-operator,

[1] Whose cocoa is still sold.

is on his way there, when he falls in with Tom Seekout, who confesses that his elbows are not presentable to the beadle, and that his belly is pinched in like the squire's greyhound. Jack Tellall informs him, in the course of an amusing dialogue, how Co-operation will put all that to rights. Number 11 of this publication was printed on good paper in clear type, and poor Tom Seekout, who appeared in Number 10, and our decorous friend Jack Tellall, continue their dialogue under conditions admissible in respectable society, and the engraving was a miracle of improvement. It represented a community of majestic and castellated proportions, quite a city of the sun, resplendent on a plateau, raising its turrets above an umbrageous forest which surrounded it, with just one glorious pathway visible by which it was accessible. Beyond was the far-stretching sea, and from above the sun sent down delighting beams through clouds which evidently hung enraptured over the happy spot. Not even Ebenezer Elliott, with his sharp-eyed criticism, could detect a single evidence of primness inflicted upon the wild luxuriance of nature. There has been only one portrait published, which represented Mr. Owen as a gentleman; and this engraving of a community, in No. 11 of the *Associate*, is the only one that had the genuine air of Paradise about it. No doubt the *Associate* was indebted for it to Mr. Minter Morgan, who had introduced it into his "Hampden in the Nineteenth Century."

Among the correspondents of the *British Co-operator* was Josiah Warren. He wrote from Cincinnati, January 30, 1830, to recommend a scheme of cheap printing, of which he was the inventor. Considering the power of giving a monopoly by patents absurd, he makes known his scheme and offers it to any one to adopt. Application was to be made to the *Free Inquirer*, conducted in New York by Frances Wright and R. D. Owen. Like Paine, Warren made a present to the public of those copyrights in inventions and books, which in Paine's case made others rich and left the author poor. The world, which is apt to despise reformers for being always indigent, should remember how some of them became so.

Mr. Josiah Warren was a member of Mr. Owen's community at New Harmony in 1826, and it was there he conceived the idea that the error of Mr. Owen's principles

was combination. Mr. Warren gave this doctrine the name of Individuality—his system being to let everybody have his own way in everything, at his own cost, which has hitherto been found to be an expensive form of waywardness.

Mrs. Wheeler, a familiar name in co-operative literature, was a lady who very sensibly advocated the usefulness of women taking part in public affairs. Frances Wright, afterwards known as Madame D'Arusmont, was a Scottish lady distinguished in the same way. Yet this did not prevent the editor from introducing into it a paragraph concerning the Anti-man Society at Maine calculated to bring a cause, which had few friends then, into contempt. The editor was one of that class who meant well and had little other capacity. To the honour of co-operators, they always and everywhere were friendly to the equal civil rights of women. The subject is never obtruded and is never long absent. It continually recurs as though women were an equal part of the human family and were naturally included in Co-operation. Mr. J. S. Mill frequented their meetings and knew their literature well, and must have listened in his youth to speculations which he subsequently illustrated to so much effect in his intrepid book, "Subjection of Women."

This journal, however, had substantial merits. It had spaciousness of view as to the organisation of industry, and published thoughtful and practical papers thereon. It had cultivated correspondents who knew how to interest the reader and were not merely useful and dreary. One gave an account of one of Mr. Owen's meetings at the London Tavern. The large tavern hall was crowded. Proceedings were delayed in order that adversaries might elect a chairman of their own. Mr. Owen quietly put it to the meeting whether, as was his custom, he should conduct his own meeting, or whether a stranger should occupy the chair. Hands were held up. It was Owen against the field. The enemy was abundantly beaten. "I have," said a religious advocate present, "often argued with Mr. Owen, but the misfortune is, I can never get him into a temper nor keep myself out of one." Mr. Owen read an address two hours and a half long. The most devoted admirer could not help trying to count the awful pile of pages in the speaker's hands, to estimate when the hearer would be

out of his misery. No House of Commons—no university assembly—no church meeting—would have borne such an infliction. Yet the audience kept peace. When the end did come, a fury took possession of the adversaries. A Presbyterian minister rushed to the platform. As he lifted up his Calvinistic voice he became aware that the Rev. Robert Taylor, who had taken upon himself the unpleasant name of "The Devil's Chaplain," stood next to him, and close to him. The Rev. Presbyterian Pharisee pushed back with his stick the Chaplain of Lucifer. The meeting understood it. It was: "Stand off, I am holier than thou." Gentlemen would consider the act an insult—a magistrate an assault—Taylor did neither, but bowed and retired a little. The meeting applauded the dignified rebuke. In due course Taylor came forward of his own right to reply. As he had wantonly caused himself to be known by a distasteful name, he was not welcome on his own account, and had a bad time of it. One evangelical lady spoke against hearing him with a volubility which showed how valuable she would have been had she lived in the days of the building of Babel. Her tongue alone would have confounded the builders better than the multiplication of languages, and saved the labour of Latin and Greek and other miseries of scholarship entailed upon us. A description of what followed, by an eye-witness, is given in the *British Co-operator*.

"Taylor at length obtained a hearing. His figure is good, his appearance prepossessing, his dress affected, though not as I had been taught to expect—eccentric. His language was florid and highly wrought, his sentences abounding in figures of speech and closing in well-formed and generally pungent periods. He was elaborate, yet fluent, with much of the trickery of eloquence, much, too, of the soundness of reflection. His gesture was appropriate to his diction, both were too highly finished. It was acting, the acting of the theatrical performer, not on the stage but before the looking-glass. It was the elegant play of the sword fencer in his practice, brilliant and dazzling, it wanted the earnestness, the ardour, the recklessness of the combatants. In short, it was more the rehearsal of the orator than the oration itself. In the midst of affectation, the greatest and the most faulty, was that (next after the display of the diamond on his little finger)

which tempted him to quotations from the learned languages. To speak Latin to an audience in the city of London was certainly out of keeping.

"The attention of the meeting was now drawn to an object equally worthy of attention, another apostle for the cause he had espoused. It was the celebrated Henry Hunt, the Radical reformer, standing on a chair near the centre of the room, with head erect, his short white hair mantling over his florid countenance, his coat thrown open, and his right hand fixed on his side, in the resolute attitude of determined self-possession. I could see in a moment why it was he ever secured an ascendancy over the wills of those whom he is in the habit of addressing. He was Old England personified, and his very figure spoke for him to English hearts. On his appearance the clamour broke out afresh, for there was a strong expression of disapprobation testified in some parts of the room against him. But he was not to be daunted; like the true English mastiff, he held his grip; John Bull might bellow, fret, and foam, but he was not to be shaken off. 'Gentlemen'—'down, down,' on one side, 'Go up, go up,' on the other. Still he was fixed and immovable.—'Gentlemen, if you will but allow me to speak, I will tell you why I will not go up.'—'Bravo, Hunt.' 'I went up and was turned down again.' Mr. Owen apologised to him, explained the mistake, and requested him to go up to the gallery. 'No,' replied the sturdy orator, 'I am not one of your puppets, to be moved up and down at your pleasure.' Mr. Owen on his side was as determined, though not so sturdy. 'Mr. Hunt, I do not hear you well, and as I would be sorry to lose anything of what you say, whether it be for or against my propositions, you will oblige me by coming up.' Good temper is Mr. Owen's distinguishing attribute, never was it displayed in a more amiable, effective manner. The stern rigidity of Hunt's features instantly relaxed, he testified his assent by a good-hearted nod, descended from his self-selected point of elevation, was by Owen's side, and commenced a harangue by declaring his strong sense of the claims which that gentleman had on the public attention, and his respect for the philanthropy of his views, and for his perseverance in pressing them on through good and evil report."

In those days the *Birmingham Co-operative Herald* existed.

The storekeeper appears to have been an object of solicitude to it. Mr. Pare was afraid that the society would become dependent upon one man, and urged that all members should become in rotation committee men, so that there might be sufficient knowledge of the affairs of the society in as many hands as would enable them to change any principal officer without arresting the progress of the society. This was provided for in the Assington co-operative farms, devised a few years later. Every shareholder is a "steward" or member of the committee in turn.

A subject discussed and not settled at the Bolton Congress of 1872, was discussed with great force by Mr. Pare in 1830, that was the permanence of share capital, and the necessity, not merely the advantage, but the necessity, of treating co-operative capital like joint-stock, railroad, and canal company capital, and not compelling the directors of a store to give members the value of their share on withdrawing from the concern. Mr. Pare urged this in his Liverpool lectures, and carried his advice as far as Gatacre, a village six miles from Liverpool, where Lady Noel Byron had, at that early period, suggested the formation of a co-operative store. Though living herself in another part of the kingdom, her solicitude for social progress was communicated to her correspondents.

Mr. Pare, who was called the first Co-operative Missionary, that being the title applied to him in the *British Co-operator*, rendered in the friendly papers of the day frequent, modest, and always interesting accounts of his tours, and his narrative is very interesting to follow, as it alone records the dates when Co-operation was first preached in some of the chief towns of England. From Liverpool Mr. Pare proceeded to Lancaster. Going in search of the mayor of that day to obtain from him the use of a public hall, he found him at the County Lunatic Asylum, which struck Mr. Pare as being a place so superior to the comfortless lodgings and cottages of mechanics and farm hands, that he thought there were considerable advantages in being mad. The mayor, however, proved to be as much demented as many of the inmates, for he disliked Co-operation, lest its funds, which did not exist, should be applied to support workmen in case of a turn-out against their employers. By other means Mr. Pare obtained a building to speak in, and

though his posters were up only four hours before his lecture, more persons came than could get in, being from two to three hundred in number. He next addressed, in Blackburn, about three hundred auditors. He was informed that there were at least twenty-six societies in this town and its immediate vicinity. The industrial ground was good in those days, for the co-operative seed sprang up fruitful everywhere. The condition of the bulk of the inhabitants he saw there is worth remembering. He beheld thousands of human beings pining with hunger, in rags, with little or no shelter for their emaciated bodies, and who had to beg to be allowed to work to obtain even these miserable conditions of existence. His next visit was to Bolton, where he lectured in the Sessions Room to about four hundred persons. On this visit he was entertained by the Rev. F. Baker, who had preceded him in delivering two lectures on Co-operation in the Mechanics' Institute of that town.

Some of the leading men of the city of Chester attended a lecture delivered by Mr. Pare on the 17th of March. A co-operative society existed then in Chester, consisting of seventeen members, who were making arrangements to supply all the co-operative societies in the kingdom with prime cheese at low prices. The Chester men seemed desirous of getting at the bottom of the subject, for they put questions to Mr. Pare which caused his lecture to extend over four hours. At this period Mr. James Watson was known as one of the store-keepers of the first London co-operative society, 36, Red Lion Square, and afterwards Jerusalem Passage, Clerkenwell. Mr. Lovett was his successor. On making a journey to Yorkshire, Mr. Watson was requested to act as a co-operative missionary, and he was furnished with tracts for distribution and the necessary credentials. Mr. Watson was an earnest and forcible speaker, who knew how to unite boldness of sentiment with moderation of manner. When Richard Carlile's shopmen were being imprisoned, beyond the rate of metropolitan supply, Mr. Watson was one, of many others, public-spirited young men, who volunteered to supply the place of those imprisoned. He took his place at Mr. Carlile's counter, and also in prison when his turn came. He was incarcerated three times through his participation in public

movements, and for periods of unpleasant length. He ultimately became one of the three famous Radical publishers (Watson, Hetherington, and Cleave), whose names were known all over the country, as leaders of the Unstamped publication movement. Mr. Watson remained in business until the opening of the Fleet Street House in 1854, when his business was purchased by the present writer. He maintained all his life a reputation for principle and integrity, and was held in personal esteem by the leading Radical members of Parliament from the days of the drafting of the People's Charter to the time of his death in 1874. Both as publisher and advocate, he always ranked as one of Mr. Owen's most practical disciples.

It was reported (in 1830) that a co-operative society was being formed at Marseilles, south of France, on the original social principle that the character of man is formed for and not by him; Mr. Hamilton, of Dalzell, appears to have carried this doctrine there. Persons wishing information about it were to apply to M. Boinet, Boulevard du Musée, No. 7, A.D., who would be at home from seven to eight in the morning for that purpose. Propagandism begins early in the day in France.

The *Newry Telegraph* reported two fervid speeches on Co-operation, by Edward Gardener and John Stevenson, made at the annual dinner of the Armagh Benevolent Society, held in the Market House, January 7, 1830. Ireland has always been favourable to Mr. Owen's views, and received him well long after England had grown angry at his apparent heresies.

A Metropolitan Co-operative Book Society was formed, which met in 19, Greville Street. In the absence of P. O. Skene, of Lewes, the chair was taken by W. Ellis. The society had in view to establish reading-rooms and libraries. This Mr. Ellis is the gentleman mentioned by Mr. J. S. Mill in his autobiography, as an early friend and associate of his, and to whom the metropolis was subsequently indebted for the Birkbeck Secular schools founded by his generosity, and directed by his trained judgment.

In October, 1830, the magazine before mentioned was published once a fortnight by Strangs, of Paternoster Row, and sold by co-operative storekeepers. It bore the double title of *Magazine of Useful Knowledge, and Co-operative Miscellany*. It took for its motto this premature sentence,

"Learning has declared war against Ignorance." It had done nothing of the kind, but was only airing itself before a larger multitude with Latin quotations—and with Greek ones, where the printer happened to have that type. Many long years elapsed before Learning attempted any war against Ignorance. The first speech reported in co-operative journals of Mr. Henry Hetherington's appeared in No. 3 of this magazine.

The first number of the *Miscellany* had to tell of a Rev. Mr. Pope, of Tunbridge Wells, who had "proved Co-operation to be totally inconsistent with the Gospel." It is fair to mention that about this period, one Rev. F. Baker, the same who entertained Mr. Pare at Bolton, appeared as an advocate of Co-operation, and published a periodical which had reached forty-three numbers in 1830, and was sold at one penny. But clerical dissentients were, however, never wanting.

After the Birmingham Political Union "was hung up," as Mr. Muntz expressed it, "like a clean gun"—and never taken down again, John Collins became known as a Chartist speaker. He was a man of some force and earnestness, but not otherwise distinguished for power. It was to his credit that he assented to that form of progress which was to be advanced by instruction rather than by force, which Chartism began to rely upon. Mr. Collins and I used to go to Harborne together, a little village some four miles from Birmingham, only famous because Thomas Attwood, the founder of the Political Union, had a seat there. Our object was to teach in a school in a little Pædobaptist Chapel. Heaven, I hope, knew what Pædobaptist meant. I did not. I was quite a youth then, and sometimes Collins used to take me by the hand as I got over the long walk badly. I remember when the sermon, which followed the school teaching, was much protracted, I used to long for dinner-time to come. I see now the humble cottage, belonging to a deacon, to which I went, in which the fire grate was very spacious, and the fire nearly invisible. I used to sit very close to it looking at the snow in the garden, which at that time covered the ground, as I ate my dinner off my knees, which usually consisted of a cold mutton chop, which my mother had thoughtfully provided, lest that article should not be prevalent in the cottage, and her dear solicitude

was quite prophetic. John Collins came to know much of Co-operation and to take interest in it. He was imprisoned two years in Warwick Gaol with Mr. Lovett, as has been said.

The impression that Co-operation was making upon politicians was set forth in striking terms in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine.*[1] The gravity of the estimate made, shows that the new industrial views were recognised as a moving force of the time, as in that quarter no undue importance would be accorded to them. The writer said: "Difficult as it is to force upon the attention of those who live in continual plenty and immoral indulgence, the severe distress of others, whom it is a trouble to them to think of, yet they can hardly be blind to the necessity of acting in a matter, which the people themselves have taken up in a way extremely novel in this country, and dangerous, or the contrary, according as the Legislature may make it. Multitudes of the common people now see clearly the state they are placed in. They perceive that their labour is valuable, if they had the means of applying it; but as their former masters have no use for it, they are driven to see whether they cannot use it for their own advantage. Those who have the virtues of thrift and patience are forming themselves into societies for the purpose of enjoying the benefit of their mutual labour; and it is impossible to look at their virtuous endeavours, to substitute comfortable competence for the horrors of dependence upon precarious employment by masters, without wishing them God-speed."

These words were evidently intended to influence those who influence affairs, and are of interest and moment still.

The last fruits of the enthusiastic period was the invention of congresses. Indeed, from 1829, and for six years after, Co-operation may be said to have lived on congresses. Heretofore such assemblies were called "Conferences." It was Mr. Pare who introduced the American term "congress," to distinguish social from political proceedings, which were known as conferences. In America, congress implied a political parliament. Mr. Pare held that he brought the term into English notice by the frequent use co-operators made of it.

[1] No. 161. January, 1830.

The first co-operative congress was held in Manchester, in May, 1830. There were delegates present from fifty-six societies, representing upwards of three thousand members, who had, by small weekly contributions and trading on co-operative principles, accumulated a capital of £6,000 in less than fifteen months.

Mr. Place has preserved a copy of the *United Trades' Co-operative Journal*, issued in 1830, in Manchester. Its price was twopence. It was printed on the best paper with the greatest typographical clearness, and contained the soberest and most intelligent writing of all the journals of this period started to represent Co-operation. The anecdotes selected were in good taste. It admitted nothing which was silly or uninstructive. Many of its quotations were selected with such judgment and knowledge that their literary interest is unabated to this day, and would be well worth reproducing. Even its original poetry was endurable, which was very rarely the case in these publications. Once in making a quotation from the *Guardian* newspaper, which it felt justified in contradicting, it suffered its correspondent who wrote upon the subject to entitle the paragraph in question, "Falsehoods of the *Manchester Guardian*." To charge a journalist with lying, because he took a different view of the condition of the operatives, was indefensible. Mr. Taylor, the editor of the *Guardian*, was himself a man of honour, but had it been otherwise it was quite sufficient to show that a writer was wrong without calling in question his veracity. This *United Trades' Journal* rendered a great service by publishing a summary of the rules in force in various co-operative societies in the kingdom—an act of thoughtfulness and labour, and one that shows that the enthusiastic period was not devoid of sagacity. To this day these rules are instructive. They marked the towns, chiefly Brighton and London, Worthing, Belper, and Birmingham, where these rules were known to be adopted. They are worthy the attention of co-operative societies now, as showing the care that early societies took to secure character, confidence, education, co-operative knowledge, and self-helping habits in their members. The following are some of the more notable rules :—

Loans of capital to the society by its own members shall

bear an interest of £5 per £100, and are not returnable without six months' notice.

In the purchase and sale of goods credit shall neither be given nor received.

Every member agrees to deal at the store of the society for those articles of daily use, which are laid in of suitable quality and sold at fair ready-money prices.

All disputes among members on the affairs of the society are to be settled by arbitration.

Any member misbehaving may be expelled by vote of the majority of members at a quarterly meeting.

No husband shall be admitted a member without his wife's appearing before the committee and expressing her consent.

A man is not eligible to be a member unless he can read and write ; and in general he must produce a specimen of his work.

No member is eligible for this committee until six months after admission to the society.

The preface to the *Co-operative Miscellany* of 1830 stated that there were then upwards of 20,000 persons united in different parts of the kingdom.

The number of societies spread over England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland were estimated by the British Association as being 266 in 1830. The members of the British Co-operative Association itself numbered 639. The enthusiasm with which Co-operation continued to be regarded was manifest by the statement in the *British Co-operator*, that in the last quarter of the year 53 societies had been formed.

When William Thompson wrote his Practical Directions for forming Communities in 1830, he stated there were nearly 300 co-operative societies of the industrial classes associated through England, Scotland, and Ireland. He spoke of two grand experiments instituted in 1825, on the principles of co-operative industry, one at New Harmony, in the State of Indiana, America, and the other at Orbiston, near Glasgow ; and of others in different parts of the United States, particularly one at Kendal, in the State of Ohio, without any connection with Mr. Owen, other than that of friendly communications. It was in 1827, he says, that the people themselves took up

the idea of co-operative industry, and names William Bryen, one of the hard-working industrious classes, as the chief promoter in Brighton, Sussex, of a Trading Fund Association. Within three years of that period the combined efforts of Mr. Philip Skene, Mr. Vesey, of Exeter, Mr. William Pare, of Birmingham, and other friends of co-operative industry, united with Mr. Bryen, led to more than eighty associations on similar principles being formed in different parts of England. He relates that the first Brighton association had accumulated funds sufficient to take a small piece of land, of twenty or thirty acres, and others had commenced the manufacture of cotton and stockings. The Brighton society published every month a periodical called the *Co-operator*, while the Birmingham society issued the *Co-operative Herald*.

We have this year (1830) an announcement of the first co-operative manufacturing community in London. The object appears to be to give employment to members. A committee was appointed to superintend the manufacture of brushes. They were to be sent to the Co-operative Bazaar, 19, Greville Street, where goods manufactured by other co-operative societies were purchased for sale. Co-operators in Burslem were sending up orders for co-operative handkerchiefs, stockings, galloons, and such things as were likely to be sold among poor people. The British Co-operative Association had the management of the arrangements, and they opened their bazaar from two to three o'clock daily. The terms on which goods were admitted were these: "The carriage of goods paid; the wholesale and retail prices fixed and attached to the articles, with an invoice, specifying the quantity, qualities, and kind of each article, which might be sent on sale, or returnable if not sold. The money derived from sales, subject to a deduction of 2½ per cent., will be paid to the society through which the goods have been sent. At such times as the proceeds of the bazaar management exceed the expenses, a dividend will be made to the sender of goods previously sold."

A list was published of seventeen societies, which in Manchester and Salford alone were formed between 1826 and 1830, bearing names like Masonic lodges, the "Benevolent," the "Friendly," the "Owenian," and others. But only the

last-named society was intending to commence manufacturing.

At that time (1830) a few co-operators in Manchester took 600 acres of waste land upon Chat Moss, and contrived to cultivate it. England had not a drearier spot in which to begin a new world. There was scarcely a thing for the eye to rest upon over a flat of several thousand acres. Railway surveyors had declared it impossible to make the Manchester and Liverpool line over it. Those who stepped upon it found it a black, wet sponge, which absorbed the pedestrian in it up to his knees. Horses who walked over it had to wear wooden pattens. It was literally a "Slough of Despond," but enthusiastic co-operators thought they could cultivate the millennium there. Co-operation had the soul of charity in it, and the apostolic virtue which hoped all things and believed all things.

CHAPTER VIII

THE DEVICE OF LABOUR EXCHANGES

"The night is darkest before the morn ;
When the pain is sorest the child is born."
KINGSLEY'S *Day of the Lord.*

So far as my reading or experience extends there is no example of a commercial movement so simple, necessary, and popular as the device of Labour Exchanges—exciting so wide an interest and dying so soon, and becoming so very dead. The exchange of labour meant really an exchange of commodities upon which labour had been expended. One plan was to take a large room, or series of rooms, where persons having articles they needed to part with could exchange them for others, or obtain a negotiable note for them. The first intimation in England of this new device of commerce of industry came from Mr. Owen. It appeared in the *Crisis* in the following form :—

"NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC : EQUITABLE LABOUR EXCHANGES' INSTITUTION OF THE INDUSTRIOUS CLASSES, GRAY'S INN ROAD, KING'S CROSS.

"Agriculturists, gardeners, manufacturers, provision merchants, factors, warehousemen, wholesale and retail dealers of all descriptions, mechanics, and all others, who may be inclined to dispose of their various articles of trade and merchandise in the only equitable manner in which men can mutually dispose of their property to each other, viz., its value in labour for equal value in labour, without the intervention of money, are requested to communicate with Mr. Samuel Austin, at the Equitable Labour Exchange.

"All letters must be post-paid—ROBERT OWEN."

These bazaars were designed to enable artificers to exchange among themselves articles they had made, by which they would save the shopkeeper's expenses. For currency labour notes were substituted, which it was thought would represent real value. The shoemaker brought his pair of shoes to the bazaar, with an invoice of the cost (calculated at sixpence per hour). The labour note, of so many hours' value, was given to the shoemaker, who could then, or at any other time, buy with them any other deposit in the bazaar—a hat, or teakettle, or a joint of meat, if he found what he wanted. Upon each transaction a commission of $8\frac{1}{3}$ per cent. was charged, in some bazaars payable in cash, to defray the expenses of the institution. In the exchanges conducted under Mr. Owen's auspices the commission charged was only one halfpenny in the shilling. In the published rules of the Equitable Labour Exchange, in Gray's Inn Road, in 1832, the name of Robert Owen appears as governor; and Thomas Allsop, Sampson Mordan, and W. Devonshire Saull, as members of council.

According to Mr. Noyes, Josiah Warren, in 1826, originated the idea of Labour Exchanges, which he communicated to Mr. Owen when he was a resident in Mr. Owen's community of New Harmony. After leaving New Harmony Mr. Warren went to Cincinnatti, where he opened a Labour Exchange under the title of a Time Store. He joined in commencing a second one in Tascarawas, Co. Ohio; a third at Mount Vernon, Indiana. He opened a fourth in 1842, at New Harmony, to which he had returned. Mr. Owen alone gave effect to the plan in England, and by whom alone it was made known.

In May, 1833, the National Equitable Labour Exchange, London, was opened at noon on May-day with some pomp, at the new rooms in Charlotte Street, Rathbone Place, London. This place extended 250 feet from the front entrance in Charlotte-street, to John Street, at the back. In Charlotte Street it appeared to be no more than one of the usual private dwellings; but on passing through the entrance it opened unexpectedly into a quadrangular building of two stories, with a covered space in the centre of 16 ft. by 130 ft. Alterations were made in it to suit the convenience of the Labour Exchange and public meetings. Nearly 12,000 people were able to

stand in it under cover and hear a speaker with an ordinary voice—it could seat 3,700 persons. Mr. Owen convened the opening meeting "purposely to announce his determination to reject the system of error, by which society had been so long governed, and plant his standard of open and direct opposition to it." He had done that sixteen years before, at the City of London Tavern; but that was a thing which would bear doing many times over. Society had a way of going on, regardless of the stand Mr. Owen made against it. Mr. Roebuck, M.P., was the chairman. The chief thing which he did was to make "known his conviction, that nothing would be done for the labouring classes unless they did it themselves." Mr. Gillon, M.P., was also a speaker. Mr. Owen then gave his address.

Mr. Owen, as head of the London exchange, was publicly offered a hundred tons of the pink-eyed potatoes. It seemed an indignity that the correspondent of all the monarchs of Europe should be publicly engaged in considering tenders for pink-eyed potatoes. Sixpence was the uniform standard of value for each hour, adopted by Mr. W. King. He it was who was the editor of a *Gazette of Labour Exchanges*. The *Gazette* stated that the first Labour Bank was established at the Gothic Hall, New Road, Marylebone, in the month of April, 1832. The projector of the bank had no capital. Mr. Owen, who understood business, objected to this bazaar; as persons who had no property to indemnify the public from loss were unfitted for the work. The Bank of Labour had no capital at its back. It was to Mr. Owen's credit that when he judged the King scheme unsound he said so. Mr. King "wondered that he should find an opponent in the 'universal philanthropist,'" evidently being of opinion that a philanthropist should approve of everything well intended, whether well devised or not. The projector thought enough to allege that he "was conscious of the purity of his intentions, and confident in the soundness of his principles"; but, as the "principles" had never been tried, and as "purity of intention," however excellent in itself, is not capital in a commercial sense, and will buy nothing in the market, the exchange could not be expected to command confidence—yet it obtained it. Within twenty weeks deposits of the value of £3,500 were made.

In writing to the *Times* concerning the Labour Exchange Institution, Mr. Owen cited the great commercial organisation of the firm of James Morrison & Co. as an approach towards the change that he intended to effect in the distribution of common wealth among the people.

A United Interests Exchange Mart and Bank was projected, and premises taken for it in Aldersgate Street, a few yards south of the corner of Long Lane, consisting of a spacious front shop, with three other floors, each of nearly the same extent, for showrooms and exchange purposes. An exchange was opened in Sheffield, a town always venturesome in social things. But it was Birmingham that stood next to London in labour exchange fervour. Mr. Owen convened a congress in 1832 in Birmingham, at which delegates from various parts of the kingdom were invited, to discuss this new scheme of local commerce. The propagandism of it was in mighty hands, wont to strike the world in a large way. At once Mr. Owen held a great meeting in Birmingham, where he excited both enthusiasm and inquiry into the nature of co-operative plans generally. Mr. Thomas Attwood, himself then a man of national repute, with a natural affinity himself for men of spacious manners, introduced Mr. Owen, with many courtly phrases, to the council of the famous Birmingham Political Union, whom Mr. Owen addressed. He delivered lectures in the public office in Dee's Royal Hotel, Temple Row, which was largely attended by ladies; and in Beardsworth's Repository, which was attended by eight thousand people. Mr. G. F. Muntz was announced to preside. Mr. Owen's subject was "Labour Exchanges"; and Mr. Beardsworth, having an eye to business, offered to sell him the repository for a labour exchange mart. Mr. John Rabone, Mr. George Edmonds (one of the most ambitious orators of the Birmingham Political Union, and subsequently Clerk of the Peace of the town), Mr. Hawkes Smith, Mr. Pare, and others, addressed the great meeting at Beardsworth's.

Birmingham being distinguished among English towns for the variety of its small trades and miscellaneous industries, exchange of any kind came congenially. Journalism there soon showed itself interested in advancing the idea. A special *Labour Exchange Gazette* was started, and on July 29, 1833,

the National Equitable Labour Exchange was opened in Coach Yard, Bull Street. Benjamin Woolfield, Esq., was the director, and Mr. James Lewes sub-director. The bankers were Spooners, Attwoods & Co. The first day the deposits were 18,000 hours, and the exchanges 900. Each day, for some time, the deposits increased, but the exchanges never exceeded one half. In August the association of depositors numbered 840. Coventry sent £30 worth of ribbons; but a much more saleable deposit was three hundredweight of good bacon, and one person undertook to take any number of well-manufactured Birmingham articles in exchange for the best Irish provisions. The capital upon which this exchange commenced was only £450, which the first three months realised a profit, clear of all rents, salaries, and other payments, of £262. By this time London was filled with the fame of the Labour Exchange Bazaar of Gray's Inn Road, which Mr. Owen had taken to accommodate the growing business which was arising around him beyond that which could be dealt with in the Charlotte Street Rooms. It was stated that in one week the deposits in the Gray's Inn Road bazaar amounted to little less than £10,000, and that if 4 per cent. out of the 8⅓ per cent. said to be then charged on those deposits were applied to the extension of exchanges, there would be a disposable accumulating fund of £400 weekly, or if the deposits and exchanges proceeded at that rate £28,000 per annum would arise for that purpose. "Over the water"—as the Surrey side of London was called—things went on swimmingly. The Labour Exchange Association was so active that in 1833 and '34 it published monthly reports of its proceedings, with carefully drawn up papers and speeches of members.

The astonishing number of deposits made in a short time, and the avidity with which exchanges were made, proved that a large amount of wealth remained stationary for the want of a market. No doubt numerous persons were stimulated by these exchanges to make articles of use and value, who before did nothing, because no means existed of disposing of them; and thus, by providing exchanges, new wealth was created. Mr. Owen strongly recommended the management of the exchange at Birmingham to be given to Mr. William Robert

Wood. Mr. Wood better understood the commercial possibilities of these Exchanges than any one else.[1] The cardinal point he insisted upon was, that each Exchange should be provided with quick, sound, practical valuators—not men muddled with labour-note ideas of sixpence per hour estimates—but who would know exactly what a thing would fetch in the market if it had to be sold out of doors. The labour of a second-rate shoemaker, or button maker, might not be worth sixpence an hour, while the labour of a skilful oculist might be worth 100 guineas. Who could appraise the value per hour of the chair painter and the landscape painter at the same sixpence? The Labour Exchange needed the pawnbroker's faculty of quickly seeing what a thing was worth. The exchange managers should have a clear eye to not giving more than could be obtained for an article if they had to sell it to a stranger. By giving more than the value obvious to the outsider, the labour notes are depreciated in value. If a man of business went into an exchange and saw persons depositing chimney ornaments and firescreens, and carrying out kettles, good hats, and sound pieces of bacon, he knew at once that things could not go on. Their rapid popularity showed that they really hit a general need, and sound management must make them profitable. At first, tradesmen around them readily agreed to take labour notes, and numerous placards were issued, and are still extant (preserved by Mr. Place),[2] giving this notice to the public. Of course these tradesmen took occasion to run round the exchange themselves, and see what kind of deposits represented the value of the notes. A weakness for "respectable" friends of the system caused in one case a whole family of shrewd, talkative professors of the "new views" to be put upon the directory of an exchange. These adroit managers did business with their friends and acquaintances,

[1] Mr. Wood remained persuaded of the utility of Labour Exchanges to the end of his days, and proposed to co-operate with me in establishing one. He became the leading dentist in Brighton and died at an advanced age. He became alderman, and his friend Mayall—the famous photographer—became mayor. Both were Huddersfield men. Brighton owed its public baths and other social improvements to Alderman Wood, to whom the memory of Owen was a constant inspiration.

[2] As many as three hundred tradesmen gave notice that the Labour Notes would be taken at their places of business, and in some cases the theatres made the same announcement—that Labour Notes would be taken at the doors.

who loaded the shelves with useless things appraised at a special rate, while valuable and saleable articles were carried away in exchange. Sharp shopkeepers sent down worthless stock in their shops, exchanged it for labour notes, and before the general public came in carried away the pick of the saleable things, with which they stocked their shops. As they put in their windows "Labour Notes taken here," they were thought wonderful friends of the exchange. With some of them the proper notice in the window would have been "Labour Exchangers taken in here." And these were the knaves who first began to depreciate Labour Notes and compare them to French assignats, and they well knew the reason why.[1] The popularity and even profit of the deposit business was such that it bore this. Then wholesale and general dealers systematically depreciated Labour Notes with a view to buy them up, which they did, and carried off all the saleable goods they could find at the exchange. These operators did not approve of the exchanges which appeared to threaten a new system of barter, and ingeniously devised means to discredit them and profit themselves in doing it. If Mr. Owen had otherwise chosen his officers in the central exchange the enemy might have been frustrated; but disinterestedness had become with him a second nature, and he took for granted the integrity of those who offered their services. When his suspicions were aroused no man could see more easily or farther into a rogue than he.

Mr. Owen rather regarded these exchanges as weak expedients of persons who thought that they could mend or mitigate a state of society which he considered should be peremptorily superseded; they had not the advantage of that strong direction. Facility and certainty of exchange is a condition not only of commerce but of production. Astute persons failed not to see that a wealth-making power resided in them. It was obvious if pawnbrokers—who received no money with deposits, but had to pay out capital for them and be debarred from realising upon articles taken in until a long period after, and then only when not redeemed—prospered, there was some probability that a

[1] On the other hand there were honest and favouring shopkeepers who took the notes with a view to promote their circulation as currency, and gave saleable goods for them, who found themselves unable to obtain a fair exchange at the bazaar, and thus they became victims of the exchange scheme.

company of labour brokers—who received cash with every deposit and paid no capital out for it, but merely gave a note for it and were at liberty to sell it the next hour—could make profit. There might have been a department where valuable articles of uncertain demand could be received on sale at the depositor's own price, to be paid for only when disposed of. Had the profits accruing been carried to the credit of customers in proportion to their dealings, as is now done in the co-operative stores, and the first five pounds of profit so gained by the exchanger capitalised to create a fund to stand at the back of the notes to prevent panic or depreciation, these Labour Exchanges might have continued, as they might now be revived.

At the Surrey branch in Blackfriars Road, which existed simultaneously with the Gray's Inn Road Exchange, the total deposits soon amounted to £32,000, and the exchanges to £16,000.

Mechanical inventions, steam engines, steamships, and projected railways had changed the character of industry before men's eyes. Dr. Church was known to be running about Birmingham on a steel horse. Though some of his patients were more alarmed at his untoward steed, he made a favourable impression upon the popular imagination. The novelty of change disposed many to believe that the new discovery in barter was the very supplement of industry wanted, and that its uses and benefits would be indefinite. Their progress was marvellous, and their first discouragement came, not from the enemy but from friends. They were the disciples of the world-makers who helped, in their mournful, misgiving way, to bring the scheme down. They regarded these exchanges as an expedient for diverging from the straight road which led to the new world. Mr. Gray says: "They proved entirely delusive, as all attempts to graft a new system upon the old must be, without any corresponding change of principles and and habits of action"; whereas it was a merit of this scheme that it required no change of principle and very little habit of action. It was their success and profit becoming obvious to untheoretical eyes that led finally to their ruin. The Jewish proprietor of Gray's Inn Road saw that good commercial results could be derived from them and conspired to obtain

them himself. But the enthusiasm which Mr. Owen had created, and which allured the public to any scheme with which he was connected at that time, was wanting to the new proprietor. He had taken a shop without being able to secure to himself what in England is called the goodwill of the business.

In January, 1834, the Labour Exchange in Gray's Inn Road was broken up by violence. The proprietor, Mr. Bromley, having had his building empty in 1831 for four months, artfully placed the keys in Mr. Owen's unsuspecting hands, to do what he pleased with it, he relinquishing any claim to rent till 1832. Nothing was to be paid for the fixtures. Mr. Owen accepted the arrangement without any schedule of fixtures or any definite agreement as to terms and tenure of future tenancy. Had the place gone on indifferently, Mr. Bromley would have been very glad for such rent as Mr. Owen would have paid him. For a year and a half Mr. Owen used the place as the grand central institution for promulgating his system. Lectures were delivered there on Sundays and other days. Great festive celebrations were held ; and many of the most eminent men of that day and of subsequent years were among the occasional frequenters of the meetings. Trade unionists, social, political, religious, and philanthropic reformers of all schools, found welcome and hearing there. No opinion, Tory, Radical, or religious, and no want of opinion, was a bar to friendliness and aid, provided the object was one intended to benefit the public. It was taking the Labour Exchange there that brought the Institution (of which London never had the like before or since) to an end. When Mr. Bromley saw the exchange succeed he took steps to obtain possession of the place, as he was satisfied Mr. Owen had discovered a mode of making money which was unknown to Mr. Bromley. One of his modest proposals, then, was that Mr. Owen should buy the whole institution at £17,000. Then he demanded that the fixtures should be paid for, which had never been estimated at more than £700. He, however, made a demand for £1,100 ; and, to prevent dispute, or unpleasantness, Mr. Owen paid him £700 out of his own pocket. It was ultimately arranged that the premises should be given up, as the directors of the exchange refused to take any further lease of the premises at

the rental asked, which was £1,700 a year. Mr. Bromley, however, was so impatient of re-possession that he did not wait even for their leaving, but procured a mob of men and broke into the place, and let in sixty-four ruffians (the exact number of the gang was set down), who smashed the secretary's doors in, took possession of the fixtures belonging to the exchange, and turned the directors into the street. The police were called, some of the rioters were taken before the magistrates, and the same discredit occurred as though Mr. Owen had not paid the £700. Of course there was a remedy in law against Mr. Bromley, but the directors were too lenient to enforce it, and they were content to open a new bazaar in the Surrey Institution, Blackfriars Road. Notwithstanding the excitement and mischievous knowledge the public had that the Gray's Inn Road place might be peremptorily closed, the amount of deposits on the last day it was opened was 6,915 hours, and the exchanges 5,850, so that the directors continued to do business to the last day at the rate of more than £50,000 a year. The lowest rent Mr. Bromley would agree to accept as a condition of their remaining was £1,400, and the rates and taxes amounted to about £300 more, making a yearly outgoing of £1,700. The business of the exchange was clearly likely to bear this; Mr. Bromley became so satisfied on this point, was so impatient to get possession, that, rather than wait a week or two for the convenience of removal, he resorted to force, and immediately issued a placard announcing that "The whole of the splendid and capacious premises, Gray's Inn Road, will be occupied in future by the National Land and Equitable Labour Exchange Company. The present occupants will close their proceedings this week, and the National Land and Equitable Labour Exchange Company will commence receiving deposits on Wednesday morning next, the 16th instant, at ten o'clock, and continue daily at the same hour; and the company's exchange stores will be opened to the public on Monday, the 21st of January, 1833; after which day the company will be ready to receive proposals for the occupation of land lying at convenient distances from the metropolis, or on the land of the intended railroad from Birmingham to King's Cross."

Here was a well-laid scheme, which was really a tribute to

the value of exchanges. This practical man, unembarrassed by any scruples, thought that if the plan succeeded so well when weighed with Mr. Owen's unpopular principles, the world would flock to the same standard when a neutral flag was displayed. He, however, overlooked that outrage, though it sometimes succeeds, is often a dangerous foundation to build upon. Mr. Owen's disciples were not all philosophers—they were human enough to feel rage, and numerous and powerful enough to make their indignation felt; and they spoke so unpleasantly of the new project and its ingenious projector, that he got few exchanges, and lost his good tenants without getting any other. He found he had not only alienated those who had made the exchange system popular; he had alarmed the public by the spectacle of violence, police cases, and failure. The National Company fell into well-earned contempt and distrust, and the Gray's Inn Road buildings became an obscure, woebegone, deserted, unprofitable holding.[1] No doubt, Labour Exchanges died there. Had Mr. Owen's friends been self-denying, stilled their hatchet tongues, and have promoted the success of the Equitable Exchange, the cause might have been saved. They did not comprehend that steam was not a failure, though a thousand experiments broke down before a single steamship sailed or railway car ran; that new medicines as often kill people as cure them before cautious, patient, experimental physicians discover the right way of administering them. Yet no one decries the curative art. But in social devices the first scoundrel or the first fool—the first thief or the first blunderer, who by over-confidence, fraud, or ignorance brings a scheme to immediate grief, sets the world against it for generations, and journalists evermore speak of it as that "abortive failure which was tried long ago and brought ruin and ignominy upon all concerned."

[1] The original correspondence on this subject and the statements and letters of Mr. Bromley to Mr. Owen, are now in the possession of The Owen Memorial Committee of Manchester.

CHAPTER IX

THE SOCIALISTIC PERIOD. 1831–1844

"Thus truth was multiplied on truth, the world
Like one great garden showed,
And thro' the wreaths of floating dark upcurl'd,
Rare sunshine flow'd."—TENNYSON.

FOR thirteen years now Co-operation has to be traced through Socialism. Store keeping had in many cases failed, and, where successful, its profits were insufficient to pave the way to the new world, much less defray the costs of that rather extensive erection. Grand schemes were revived, in which idleness and vice, silliness and poverty were to cease by mutual arrangement. This state of things came to bear the name of Socialism.

Social and co-operative literature has not been very brilliant. Robert Dale Owen was incomparably the best writer of the early period. William Hawkes Smith, of Birmingham, had an animated readable style. Mr. Minter Morgan had literary ambition. In this period the working-men writers were often eloquent by impulse and passion. They told their story ofttimes with verbose energy. There were frequent instances of wit and humour in their platform arguments. But their writing was best endurable to persons of the same way of thinking, to whom earnestness was eloquence, and to whom any argument in which they agreed seemed witty. Any man who stood up manfully for opinions, at which society scowled, seemed admirable, and was admirable in doing it; and by those who thought that deliverance from precariousness lay that way, no art save sincerity was esteemed.

English men, as a rule, getso few large ideas that when one

makes its way into their mind, whether political, religious, or social, they go mad about it for the first few years. They see nothing but that. Everything else in the world is obscure to them ; and they believe that their route is the high-road to the millennium. No Co-operators arose who had the pen of Bunyan, the Bedford tinker.

Many books were published without any date, or any allusion by which a person unacquainted with the time could determine when they were issued. So important a book as William Thompson's "Practical Directions for the Establishment of Communities" merely contains an incidental date which suggests rather than tells when it appeared. All these authors thought they were commencing a new world, and that their works would be known and issued at the beginning of things. Even Robert Fellowes, B.A., Oxon, who published an address to the people in 1799, on the "Genius of Democracy," was not well served by the printer, who made him say that "Nelson's victory on the Nile had lain the *posterity* of France in the dust." That would have been a famous achievement and saved Europe much trouble. Posterity ought to have been prosperity. Huber states that some ants are subject to a peculiar malady, which, after being once seized with it, prevents them moving any more in a straight line. There are a great many writers who are subject to this disease, who not only move, but reason deviously, and never arrive at the point of their meaning. Ant writers of this description overrun socialist literature.

With the close of 1830 periodicals representing Co-operation appear to cease. Few, if any, reached 1831. No new ones were announced in London for that year, and no trace of any remain. Another form of activity commenced. As 1830 was the year of journals, 1831 was the year of congresses. The fervour of the five years from 1826 to 1830 stimulated action, and then ceased to direct it. Societies popular in conception can hardly become so in practice, or be largely sustained without the animation and counsel which well-contrived periodicals supply. None could advertise or pay for competent editorship or competent contributors. It comes to pass that journals written by charity come to be read only by charity. At length, in 1832, Mr. Owen entered the field of weekly journalship himself, and issued a much larger paper than had

ever before appeared, purporting to represent Co-operation. Of course it must bear a momentous title if Mr. Owen had anything to do with it, and accordingly it was named *The Crisis*. The poor are always in a crisis, and rich and poor in that year were rather better off in this respect than they had been for a long time. There was a profitable crisis approaching of some importance, for the Reform Bill was near, but this did not concern Mr. Owen, and it was scarcely mentioned in the volume edited by him. The French Revolution had occurred two years previously, and Mr. Owen narrowly escaped being shot in it; but as Louis Philippe was not a believer in the "new views," Mr. Owen made no note of his deportation from France. It was the change from error and misery to truth and happiness, by the introduction of communistic plans, that was to constitute *the* crisis. Mr. Owen proposed to offer for the guidance of the affairs of men the heroic precept of "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, without mystery, mixture of error, or the fear of man"—which the world has certainly not seen yet. It was proof that social expectation in Owen was still great, that 12,000 copies were sold immediately *The Crisis* was out, and a second edition of 5,000 was issued.

In the meantime the provinces were busy with organs of associative opinion. After the first subsidence of Co-operative journals in London they arose in Lancashire, and were continued during 1831 and 1832 in a more practical way than in London, the price being mostly a penny, while in London they were published as sixpenny magazines, and, of course, only purchased by people who had sixpence to spare; while in the provinces Co-operation had become a matter of interest chiefly to workmen who had less to spare. Then in London and the south of England Co-operation was more sentimental, as though the warmer atmosphere rarefied it; while in the north it appeared as though the cold condensed it. In Lancashire and Yorkshire journals were more practical. Instead of theories about the happiness of the higher orders, the pages were filled with reports of societies actually in operation with accounts of their experience and profit to the "lower orders."

Monthly papers had hitherto been the rule, it being illegal then to publish news earlier than twenty-eight days old, unless the paper bore the newspaper stamp; which made it

impossible to issue a weekly paper which reported immediate proceedings. Long before the newspaper stamp was abolished considerable latitude had been allowed by the Government with respect to journals representing religious, scientific, or educational movements. It was impossible for the Stamp Office to make a restrictive definition of news. All weekly publications reporting any proceeding which gave immediate information came under the definition of a newspaper; and Mr. Owen's *Crisis* might have been put down at any time had any one called the attention of the law officers to it. Mr. Collett made this clear when he stopped Mr. Dickens' *Household Narrative of Current Events*, and brought the *Athenæum* within the operation of the law.

The *Lancashire Co-operator, or Useful Classes' Advocate*, as it with some judgment called itself, took for its motto this well-conceived improvement upon the half maxim, "Union is strength," namely—

> "Numbers without union are powerless,
> And union without knowledge is useless."

This publication, edited by Mr. E. T. Craig, first appeared in September, 1831. It published addresses to Christian co-operators, who, however, could never be persuaded to take it. This journal was locally well received, and was sent out by the Manchester and Salford Co-operative Council. It was a small penny periodical, the expense of issuing which could scarcely have cost the members more than a farthing each, even if none had been sold. The editor showed great taste in selecting illustrative extracts. One was from Shipley, the Bishop of St. Asaph, which set forth that the art "of preventing insurrection is not to take from the people the power to resist, but to make it their interest to obey." The fifth number reported a co-operative tea-party, attended by about a hundred and thirty men and women, in Halifax. In September a successor to this little journal appeared under the title of *The Lancashire and Yorkshire Co-operator*, resembling its predecessor in every respect, with the addition only of the name of "Yorkshire." In those days adversaries were fond of describing Co-operation as an *ignis fatuus*. An article under that term—"Co-operation an *Ignis Fatuus*"—was written.

Fifty people read the title for one who read the article.[1] In the second number of this two-counties' journal Mr. B. Warden, an enthusiastic saddler, of Marylebone, addressed a communication to the "Eight Millions of Workpeople of the British Nation," though it was perfectly certain that eight hundred would never see it. The editor continued to make extracts from Bishop Shipley; and, knowing that co-operators were esteemed latitudinarians in religion, because they were more scrupulous in believing only what they could give an account of in reason, he judiciously called attention to Bishop Shipley's wise saying: "I am not afraid of those tender and scrupulous consciences who are over-cautious of professing or believing too much. . . . I respect their integrity. The men I am afraid of are the men who believe everything, who subscribe everything, and vote for everything." These principleless evasionists overrun the country still and pass for respectable persons of irreproachable faith. This journal continued until February, 1832—writing to the last about Co-operation being an *ignis fatuus*. It, however, reappeared as a four-weekly organ. There was no halfpenny postage of publications in those days, and the editor intimated that the cost of carriage proved a barrier to its circulation, and the "Six Acts" prohibiting their giving news, such as reports of lectures or societies' meetings, oftener than once a month, they had determined to issue their journal in future monthly; but whether the "Six Acts" frightened them from discovering the name of the month or year of issue did not transpire. The journal never contained the one or the other till, incidentally, in October, the month and year appeared. In its monthly form it was printed very prettily. It was in double columns, and the chief subjects of each page was printed at the head. The new series commenced by another address from Mr. B. Warden, "To the Eight Millions." Its last number appeared in November, and was entirely occupied with a report of the fourth Congress of delegates, which was held at Liverpool. That year Mr. T. Wayland, of Lincoln's Inn, published a work on the "Equalisation of Property and the Formation of Communities."

[1] The adversaries whose eyes fell on the suspicious title exclaimed: "We always said co-operators were under a delusion, and now they see it themselves."

The Congresses and their incidents will be more intelligible, perhaps, if related in the order of their succession. The first Congress was held in Manchester in 1830. The second Co-operative Congress was held in Birmingham in October, 1831, and for a season divided attention with the Reform Bill in that town. It met in commodious rooms in the Old Square. At this Congress, Rowland Detrosier was present, who had already distinguished himself by the possession of unusual scientific and political knowledge for one of his rank of life, and who had a voice, an energy, and an eloquence which was considered strikingly to resemble Brougham's.

Birmingham in those days was quite a centre of Co-operative inspiration. Here the first organised impulse was given to the formation of a band of missionaries. Here the Congress proposed to contribute to the capital of the *Voice of the People*, with a view to its becoming the accredited organ of the movement. Then there were no railways nor funds for coaches, and two of the delegates from Glasgow walked the whole distance, nearly 300 miles. Robert Owen and William Thompson were the chairmen of the Congress. In December of the following year a public meeting of 8,000 persons was held, lasting from eleven in the morning till four o'clock in the afternoon, consisting of small manufacturers, shopkeepers, operatives, and many ladies and persons of the wealthier classes. Mr. Owen said, in writing to his son Dale, that "in all his experience in Europe and America he had never witnessed so numerous and gratifying a meeting."[1]

The third Co-operative Congress, held in the Gray's Inn Road Institution, London, in 1832, was notable for many things. Further and more open attempts were made to promote political indifference among co-operators. Mr. Owen remarked that "despotic governments were frequently found to be better than those called democratic. In the countries where those governments existed the industrial classes were not found in such misery and destitution as in this country, and therefore on this ground there was no reason to dislike despotism. As far as the co-operative system was concerned, it was of no consequence whether governments were despotic or not."

[1] *Crisis*, No. 39, 1832.

Mr. Joseph Hume, M.P., who was a visitor to the Congress, at once challenged this fatal doctrine of political indifferentism. He said "he had himself been a co-operator, perhaps longer than most present. He was surprised to hear what had been said in reference to the character of governments. The English was not a democratic government. Though democratic in name, it was despotic in practice. In Austria and Constantinople despotism was exercised by one man. In England it was inflicted by many. He was surprised also that popular instruction was not urged in Mr. Owen's address. It was only by knowledge that the people could be freed from the trammels of bad laws and State religion." The number of persons attending this Congress were eight hundred on the day on which it assembled: certainly showing great popular interest in the proceedings. The new project of Labour Exchanges was that which was uppermost in the minds of the public, both at the Birmingham Congress and at this great one in London.

The first number of the *Crisis*, before mentioned, announced this Co-operative Congress of the associations in Great Britain and Ireland, and the societies were admonished "to choose men capable of having their minds elevated, and of such moral courage and singleness of purpose that the passions of men should not be able to turn them from the godlike course which they will have to run." A delegate needed to have a good deal of courage to present himself at the Gray's Inn Road Congress, as a person likely to fulfil these high conditions, especially as all the members of Parliament were invited to meet the men of the "godlike" career. It is curious to observe all through the history of social and other reform how few leaders seemed to consider how far their language would be likely to excite the amusement, rather than the respect, of those who differ from them.

Mr. Pare reported "the absence of Mr. Portman, M.P.; Mr. Hughes, M.P. [there was a Mr. Hughes, M.P., favourable to Co-operation in that day]. Mr. Slaney, M.P., had agreed to support a petition; but neither Lord Brougham nor Mr. O'Connell, who were to present it, ever did so, or even acknowledged its receipt"—not worth telling, since it gave the public the idea that those honourable members did not

think much of the Congress—the probability being that both gentlemen were overwhelmed with more applications than they could attend to, or even write to say so. Lord Boston sent a letter to the Congress.[1]

Three members of Parliament—Mr. Hume, Mr. Mackinnon, and Mr. James Johnson—appear to have been present. Mr. Owen presided. The names best known to co-operative history of the delegates who attended were Dr. Wade, who afterwards wrote a history of the working class; William Lovett, honourably known subsequently for his advocacy of educational Chartism; Mr. John Finch, a Liverpool iron merchant, a famous advocate of temperance, and a man of great earnestness—a religious man with great capacity for making Socialism disagreeable to religious people; Mr. William Pare, of Birmingham; Mr. Joseph Smith, of Salford; James Watson, B. Cousins, John Cleave, and the Rev. Thomas Macconnell, a ready and powerful speaker, not known subsequently to much advantage. Mr. Hume came in the course of the Congress, and, as we have seen, took part in the proceedings—the report of which was made and edited on the order of the Congress, by William Carpenter, a famous name among the reformers of that day as the author of "Political Letters," and many publications which still live in political recollection. The motto of the political tracts published by William Carpenter was: "Every man for every man, himself included"—a co-operative device in which it was provided that the individual should not lose sight of himself. In other respects this was a remarkable Congress. It adopted a wise and much-needed resolution upon which nobody acted, which, however, was ordered to be the standing motto of the society, to be printed with all publications regarded as official, issued by the co-operative body. It was this:

"Whereas, the co-operative world contains persons of all religious sects, and of all political parties, it is unanimously resolved—that co-operators *as such* are not identified with any religious, irreligious, or political tenets whatever; neither those of Mr. Owen nor any other individual."

This resolution was brought forward by Mr. Owen, and showed good sense on his part. It was, however, impracti-

[1] *Crisis*, May 5, 1832.

cable since the principles of Co-operation as explained by him, and accepted by co-operators, did contradict the popular belief of the day as respects the unwilfulness of sin, the unjustifiableness of punishment (except as a means of deterring others), the power of influencing character by well-devised material conditions. No resolution could establish neutrality in a party whose principles committed it to dissent from the popular theology.

At this Congress the United Kingdom was divided into nine missionary districts, with a council and secretary for each. 1. The Metropolis; 2. Birmingham; 3. Manchester; 4. Glasgow; 5. Belfast; 6. Dublin; 7. Cork; 8. Edinburgh; 9. Norwich. The "old immoral world" was to be assaulted at many points.

At this Congress a circular was sent to all the societies, "Regulations for Co-operative Societies":—

"1. Let it be universally understood, that the grand ultimate object of all co-operative societies, whether engaged in trading, manufacturing, or agricultural pursuits, *is community in land.*

"2. To effect this purpose, a weekly subscription, either in money, goods, or labour, from a penny to any other amount agreed upon, is indispensably necessary to be continued from year to year, until a capital sufficient to accomplish the object of the society be accumulated." [1]

The majority of co-operators had formed stores and established numerous manufacturing societies for the mutual advantage of the members. Many friends, among the middle and upper classes, had established co-operative stores, and had advanced capital to start them, from a kindly regard to the welfare of the members, sometimes to improve their social habits and train them in economy; and sometimes with the view to control their social and religious views by their influence as patrons. As working men grew independent in spirit this patronage was now and then declined, and sometimes resented. England, Ireland, and Scotland were studded, England especially, in Yorkshire and Lancashire, with co-operative manufacturing and provision associations, similar in character but less opulent than those which we now know. Several of

[1] This resolution led to co-operative stores being formed with a view to devote their profits to a fund for purchasing community land.

these stores were destroyed by success. The members for a time made money, but did not capitalise their profits, nor had they discovered the principle of dividing profits in proportion to purchases. The shareholders simply found success monotonous. Some betook themselves to other enterprises more adventurous. In some cases want of religious toleration broke up the society. Bad management ruined others. In possibly quite as many instances scoundrel managers extinguished the society. The law, as has been said, enabled a thief to plead that being a member of the society he only robbed himself, although he stole the shares of everybody else. The amendment of this state of things was not attempted until twenty years later, when lawyers joined the co-operative movement. Mr. E. Vansittart Neale, Mr. J. Malcolm Ludlow, Mr. Thomas Hughes, J. J. Furnival, and others, took Parliamentary action, and these crime-encouraging laws were ended.

Co-operators were invited to set out, like pilgrims, to the land of Beulah, where Acts of Parliament were unknown, or unnecessary. Of these dreams Mr. Pare spoke happily, and with the good sense from which English communists never departed. "It was true," he said, "they wished equality, but it was *voluntary* equality. It was true they were levellers, but they wished to level up and not down. They sought to create and retain fresh wealth for themselves." [1]

This Congress meant business, for, on Mr. Owen communicating that community land might be obtained if thought desirable, at Aylesbury, in Bucks, of four hundred acres, with one thousand acres adjoining, which he thought might also be had, he, Mr. Thompson, and Mr. Bromley were appointed to inspect the estate, and a deputation was likewise appointed to wait upon Mr. Morgan, of the Stock Exchange, and endeavour to effect a loan of £250,000." [2]

The fourth Congress of delegates was held in Liverpool, October, 1832. So impatient and confident of progress were the co-operative communists becoming, that they held two Congresses in one year.

[1] *Crisis*, No. iv., 1832.

[2] Report of Third Co-operative Congress, 1832. Reported and Edited by order of the Congress by William Carpenter. It was a rule in those times always to have the Congress reported and edited by men of mark.

The fifth Co-operative Congress was held at Huddersfield in April, 1833, when a public meeting took place in the White Hart Inn, and one was held at Back Green, called by the town crier. Mr. Rigby's name appears for the first time at this Congress as a delegate from Manchester. It was stated that "numerous delegates from the various co-operative societies throughout the kingdom gave encouraging accounts of their progress, and that the societies in the West Riding of Yorkshire alone had accumulated a capital of £5,000, which was thought a great sum then in the north. It was at this Congress that the death of Mr. Thompson, of Cork, was announced by Mr. Owen, which was matter of deep regret to all social reformers. Mr. Stock, High Constable of Huddersfield, spoke at the White Hart meeting, and Mr. Owen moved a vote of thanks to their patriotic High Constable." Mr. W. R. Wood, of London, was appointed one of the secretaries of the Congress. "A provisional committee was appointed to immediately engage premises for a Labour Exchange." This Congress is described in the *Crisis* for May, 1833, as the sixth. In September of the same year the full report is reprinted as that of the "fifth Congress," which appears to be the right enumeration.

The sixth Congress was held at West End, Barnsley, March 31, 1834. It is not, so far as I can trace, even mentioned in the *Crisis*.

The seventh Congress recorded was held at Halifax, April 20, 1835. This was the last meeting of delegates from stores described as "a Co-operative Congress." This Halifax Congress was the end of the Co-operative Congress series. They lasted six years.

This year, 1835, the Association of All Classes was formed, and in May was held the first of the Socialist Congresses. It was not convened as a delegate Congress, but was open to all who cared to come. It was really the great meeting at which the A.A.C.A.N. [Association of All Classes of All Nations] was floated. The second Socialist Congress was convened at Burton Chapel, Burton-street, Burton Crescent, London. Its proceedings consisted of addresses and resolutions.

The third Socialist Congress was held in Manchester, May, 1837. It assembled in the Social Institution, Great George

Street, Salford. The Congress was intended to be, and is always described as the "Manchester" Congress.

The practical result of this Congress was the formation of a National Community Friendly Society. On the motion of Mr. Lloyd Jones, a Missionary and Tract Society was resolved on.

The chief things otherwise arranged were the enrolment of the society under the 10th George the Fourth, chap. 56, as amended by the 4th and 5th of William the Fourth, for the purpose of obtaining legal security for the funds of a society having in view the establishment of a system of united property, labour, and education among the members thereof. Mr. James Rigby, of Salford, and Alexander Campbell, of Glasgow, were appointed the permanent missionaries of the association, who were to receive instructions from the Central Board of the Home Department. The Foreign department announced was little heard of afterwards, though London was assigned as the seat of the foreign government. The main objects of all the resolutions, and departments, were founding communities of united interests. The fervour which prevailed at this period was indicated in an editorial article on "The Socialists' Campaign," in which it was pointed out that things would go on badly everywhere, "until 'The Book'—the Book of the New Moral World—shall be received and acknowledged as a guide, not simply to all parties, but to the entire family of human kind."

The second quarterly report, presented after the announcement of the Home and Foreign departments referred to, showed a total income of only £122 10s. 4d. A revenue of £500 a year certainly suggested that the world was going to be governed with a very moderate budget.

The fourth Socialist Congress was held in Manchester, May, 1838. Mr. F. Hollick was first appointed a missionary at this Congress. At the same meeting Messrs. William Clegg, John Finch, and Joseph Smith were instructed to seek an estate capable of accommodating five hundred persons. It adjourned to the 30th of July to Birmingham, where it met under the designation of a "Congress of Delegates of the National Community Friendly Society." Mr. Owen, the president, artfully read to the delegates an account of a council

of savages in the South Seas,[1] where throughout the whole of the proceedings no two persons had attempted to speak at the same time—no speaker had attempted to impugn the motives or opinions of the rest—but all had honourably confined themselves to the question before them—one of many instances in which savages are capable of teaching the civilised.

The two last-named associations—that of All Classes of All Nations and the National Community Society—made a proclamation at this Congress, and the "Outline of the Rational System of Society" was first issued then.

The fifth Congress of this series was held in Birmingham in May, 1839. Birmingham had become so influential a centre of Co-operation, that not only was the *New Moral World* printed and published in it, but the Central Boards of the two associations were established in Bennett's Hill, and the longest Congress that had then been held took place in Birmingham. The Congress there of 1839 sat sixteen days. The Association of All Classes and the National Community Society were amalgamated and transmuted into something more wonderful still, "The Universal Community Society of Rational Religionists."

The sixth Congress met in a music saloon, South Parade, Leeds, in May, 1840. The chief announcement made was that since the last Congress the estate of East Tytherly, in Hants, had been secured for the purposes of a community. This first Congress of the Community Society was occupied chiefly with the affairs of Tytherly.

The seventh Congress (second of the Universal Community Society of Rational Religionists) met in Manchester in the great hall of the Social Institution, May, 1841. The affairs of Tytherly—the Queenwood Community, as it came to be called—was the main topic of debates, which lasted seventeen days. In the proceedings of this Congress the name of the present writer appears for the first time officially as appointed Social Missionary for Sheffield.

The eighth Congress opened May, 1842, in the new building, Harmony Hall, Queenwood. Standing orders were published this year. The later Congresses showed business progress and order of deliberation. More than the powers of a prime

[1] From "Montgomery's Travels."

minister were accorded to the president, that of choosing his administration and changing them at his discretion. This was the first Queenwood Congress. The docility which persecution had taught some tongues was shown by Mr. Fleming at this Congress, where he said by way of admonition to social missionaries that "fondness for theological controversy always argued an ill-regulated mind, to say the least of it; and he who fostered that spirit could be neither good nor happy."

The ninth Congress was a special one, called at the Institution, 23, John Street, Tottenham Court Road, July, 1842, to take the affairs of Harmony into consideration, as funds were wanted. The Congress sat on Sunday. The business occupied nine days.

The tenth Congress of May, 1843, again held at Harmony Hall, was styled the "Eighth Session of the Congress of the Rational Society" (the "special" Congress not being counted in official enumeration).

The eleventh Congress of the "Rational Society," as it was now called, took place again at Harmony Hall, May 10, 1844. Harmony Hall affairs occupied the main time of the delegates, who grew fewer as the business became more serious. Lack of funds and diminished members deterred or disqualified many societies from electing representatives.

The twelfth Congress met again at Harmony Hall, May 10, 1845. A series of elaborate business papers and financial and other statements were laid before the delegates. Mr. George Simpson was now the general secretary, quite the ablest man who had held the office in later years. Had Mr. Simpson been secretary from the beginning of the Queenwood community it would probably have had a different fate. A clear-minded, single-minded, and capable financial secretary is of priceless value in experimental undertakings.

A thirteenth "special" Congress was convened at the Literary and Scientific Institution, John Street, London, in July, 1845. The disposal of Harmony was the critical question debated. The proceedings were remarkable for a curious reactionary speech made by Mr. Lloyd Jones, who said "he had serious doubts now as to the good effects of their preaching for several years past, and it was with him a question whether they had bettered the state of those who by their preaching

they had loosed from the authority they were formerly under, and placed them under themselves."[1] Mr. Henry Hetherington stoutly said "it was always good to release individuals from the influence of bad men and false opinions, and was at a loss to conceive how people could be made better if it was not done." There are times when able men are discouraged at the small impression made on those with whom they are directly in contact. Truth often deflects from those it strikes, travels far and hits other men. Time alone shows the good done. It is worth while telling mankind when they are in known wrong. It gives men a motive to look in that direction. Besides, it is the duty of those who strive to be reformers to take care when they set men free from ignorant aims, that they place them under the dominion of intelligent and demonstrable ones, and provide for such repetitions of the teaching as shall keep the new conception strong and clear.

Socialism under Mr. Owen's inspiration and its own enthusiasm continued in its grand ways to the end. It issued proclamations, manifestoes, and addresses to her Majesty. If the Queen preserved them she must have left a fine collection.

The fourteenth and last of the Socialist Congresses was held at Queenwood Farm, June 30, 1846.[2] The *New Moral World* had ceased then, and these proceedings were reported in the *Reasoner*, which from 1846 vindicated and explained co-operative principle, and in every subsequent publication under the same editorship.

George Petrie, a Scotchman by birth, but who had the appearance of an Irish gentleman, served as a private in the army, and took part in the Peninsular wars. He was a man of courage, who ran generous and frightful risks for his comrades, from which only his wit extricated him. Settling in London among the co-operators he wrote a poem on "Equality," which was dedicated to Robert Dale Owen. He was an energetic man, and attracted many personal friends. He became an inmate of one of Mr. Baume's experimental cottages on the Frenchman's Island,[3] where he became insane in a month.

The Rev. C. B. Dunn, curate of Camberworth, is a name

[1] *New Moral World*, July 26, 1845. [2] *Reasoner*, July 8, 1846.
[3] Pentonville Prison stands on the spot now.

which frequently occurs in the Congress and other co-operative reports as a successful speaker and advocate of Co-operation.

Among the writers of co-operative melodies was Mrs. Mary Leman Grimstone, a popular contributor to the *Monthly Repository*, edited by W. J. Fox, who some twenty-five years later became member of Parliament for Oldham, and who himself was one of the early and literary friends of Co-operation. Mrs. Grimstone wrote an acrostic on the founder of Co-operation :—

"O mnipotent benevolence, this is thy holy reign :
W oe, want, crime, vice, and ignorance shall fall before thy fame ;
E re long, o'er all the gladd'n'd earth shall thy full blaze be glowing,
N or leave a spot that shall not hear and bless the name of OWEN !"

All these glowing predictions should be deposited privately in some House of Prophecy, to be brought out when the day of fulfilment comes. The *Crisis* placed on the title-page of the first volume a portrait of Robert Owen enough to scare any one away from its pages. To compensate for this a vignette appeared, representing the Labour Exchange Institution at Gray's Inn Road. The design was a sort of Canaletto interior. The place never looked half so well as in this engraving. Very early in volume two this disappeared, and gave place to a large straggling parallelogram of a community. The *Crisis* was the first London weekly paper representing Co-operation, and excited great interest and hope.

The friends of the "great change" impending were far from intending that the public should pass through the "crisis" without knowing it. The Social Missionary and Tract Society of the time established three stations—at Primrose Hill, Copenhagen Fields, and White Conduit House —where they sold sixteen dozen of the *Crisis* in one day. All matters of interest to the party were made known in its columns. Mr. F. Bate would write a note to the editor "announcing that the Annual Report of the London Society would be received at Burton Rooms on Sunday morning, at ten o'clock."

Though the co-operators were charged with latitudinarianism as respects responsibility, they appear to have had a very sharp conception of it in practice. Mr. Eamonson was a shining light of that day. It was he who delayed the index of the

first volume of the *Crisis* for some time, in order to get a good likeness of Mr. Owen to put upon the title-page; and who finally produced that alarming one of which the reader has been told. This gentleman, having a debt which he was unable to get paid, actually inserted in the *Crisis* the following notice:—

"To Persons in Debt.—Whereas, if Mr. Puckeridge, alias Mr. Mackellon, proprietor of the Royal Clarence Theatre, New Road, does not immediately settle the small account which is due to Eamonson, 15, Chichester Place, for papers, he will continue to give publicity to it by this and other means, as also some other persons who are in his debt, and whose conduct has been shuffling and unmanly."

The sub-editor who suffered this notice to appear should have been wheeled away by the first costermonger who passed by the office with his barrow.

In the thirty-fifth number of the *Crisis* Mr. Owen associated with himself his son, Mr. Robert Dale Owen, as conductor of the paper. This occurred in November, 1832. Mr. Dale Owen and his father's joint names appeared for the last time in 1833. Volume two was much diminished in size. Articles still appeared in it with the welcome signature of "R. D. O." Soon after, the journal stated that its co-editor, Robert Dale Owen, had set out for the United States; and the title-page bore the new title of *National Co-operative Trades Union, and Equitable Exchange Gazette*, the proceedings of Labour Exchanges and projected communities were the principal topics, and it gave the additional information that it was "Under the patronage of Robert Owen." A third volume commenced in September, 1833. It now returned to its original size and name, and was again a spacious, well-printed paper.

From the prevalence of Mr. Owen's articles and expositions of his views in it, the probability is that he found the funds.[1] Its price was now three halfpence, having previously been one

[1] When the Labour Exchange was broken up at Gray's Inn Road by violence, 9,000 hours of labour notes were stolen—"abstracted" Mr. Owen said. These Mr. Owen undertook should be honoured if presented. About the time of the Queenwood Community of 1840, Mr. Owen appears to have come to the end of the money he had reserved for the furtherance of social principle, and appears afterwards limited to an income only sufficient for his personal comfort.

penny. It now bore two small engravings on either side of the title, one representing a small town where the buildings, on one hand, appear in very irregular groups, while opposite is a lunatic asylum. All the people to be seen in the streets before it are crippled, or blind, or ragged; while in the new town the buildings are in mathematical order; the walks well laid out, all the people there are well dressed, well-to-do, and perfectly upright. The artist, however, had no genius for sketching the new world; for the old, immoral arrangement of the houses, with their quaint appearance, presented a far better skyline than the monotonous regularity of the well-built pile. The lunatic asylum had a far more picturesque appearance, and must have been a pleasanter place to live in than the solid, prosaic structure with which it was contrasted.

A fourth and last volume of the *Crisis* appeared in 1834. By that time all the diagrams had disappeared. There was less and less of Mr. Owen in its pages, and more and more of the Rev. J. E. Smith, who was a continual lecturer at the Charlotte Street Institution, and his fertile and industrious lectures frequently filled the pages of the *Crisis*, which became more various in contents, and more readable; but Mr. Smith lectured upon Socialism with so much ingenuity that Mr. Owen did not know his own system, and at last he protested, announcing that he would issue an entirely new publication, to be called the *New Moral World*, stating, with his usual grandeur, that "the great crisis of human nature would be passed that week." At length the date was definite and the event near. Three years the crisis had been pulling itself together, but then, the world was shy. It had now determined to make the plunge. In the same number Mr. J. E. Smith protested, and announced that any persons left undispersed by the crisis he would gather into a fold of his own, and announced a new publication to be called the *Shepherd*. Amid a shower of fables and playful gibes at his illustrious colleagues and his disciples, Mr. Smith took his departure.

The Rev. J. E. Smith, better known subsequently as "Shepherd Smith," was one of those clever and curious spirits who alighted within the confines of Co-operation. He

was a born mystic, who explained everything by means of indefinite and untraceable analogies. He entertained his hearers, he baffled his questioners, he evaded his adversaries. He constantly said excellent things, but all that was admirable was mostly irrelevant. He became the wonder and delight of thousands who never hoped to understand him. Mr. Smith afterwards achieved a wide and prolonged repute as the fertile, diverting editor of the *Family Herald*. He made a fortune by his wit and inexhaustible variety, and, exemplary editor! he left it among his contributors, with a considerable portion to Mr. B. D. Cousins, his publisher, a pleasant and active promoter of Co-operation, whose name was honourably associated with those of Hetherington, Watson, and Cleave.

The *Crisis*, like all propagandist papers which preceded it, and many which followed it, appeared in several sizes, with fluctuations in quality, colour of paper, infirmity of type and orthography, price, and changed names. Like flags carried in battle, they were made out of such material as happened to be available in the exigencies of forced marches, and were often shot into tatters by the enemy. Taxes upon knowledge and upon news hampered them, and rendered them unable to include matter of daily interest. *The True Sun*, of 1834, stated that the *Crisis* was prevented assuming the character of a newspaper through the cost of the stamp, or it would probably have had a prosperous existence.

Two *New Moral Worlds* appeared—the first was issued August 30, 1834, and was larger and altogether better printed than the second, which was issued three months later, and formed the first of a series of annual volumes, which were continued until 1845. It showed vitality in a movement, attempting larger schemes when lesser ones had failed, that its weekly journal, the *New Moral World*, should have a career of twelve years before it. The August issue was described as the "Official Gazette of the National Association of Industry, Humanity, and Knowledge," a most compendious representation, it must be owned. The first article, addressed to the "Unions of Great Britain and Ireland," was signed W. R. Wood, the young and eloquent speaker, whose name appeared in the proceedings in relation to Labour Exchange.

The *New Moral World* may be regarded as the most

important, the longest continued periodical which the co-operators had established. Co-operation, however, was less formally noticed than in the *Crisis*. At this time co-operative societies were dying out all around. Mr. Owen and his disciples were more and more influenced by the belief that these small affairs could effect no permanent change in society, and that they must concentrate their endeavours on the establishment of the great social scheme, which should demonstrate once for all and for ever the possibility and advantages of organised industry and organised society. The failure of the Indiana and the Orbiston experiments certainly discouraged advocates, but Mr. Owen's persistent assertions that a larger combination of means only was wanted to attain a striking success, kept up the faith of many adherents. The missionary propaganda proposed in 1832, and put in operation in 1833, created a new generation of adherents. Numerous young men of considerabe ability were inspired by the addresses made in various towns, and the facilities of discussion afforded in the various lecture-rooms gave them opportunities for public speaking. Popular excitement arising, and large audiences being attracted, active and provoking adversaries made their appearance, and all who could address an audience took the platform in defence of the new principles, acquired training as public debaters, and a stand was made on behalf of a great social change. How could any one within that enthusiastic circle doubt that Mr. Owen saw his way to the introduction of the new co-operative world, seeing that he had applied for the government of Coaquila and Texas, and that the Mexican Government had actually conceded to him the jurisdiction of the entire line of frontier stretching from the Gulf of Mexico to the Pacific Ocean, some 1,400 miles in length, and 150 miles in breadth, in which to establish his wonderful government of peace and plenty?[1] To plant the English millennium on 1,000 or 2,000 acres would, to use Mr. Disraeli's unpleasant and ignominious simile, be a mere "flea bite" of progress.

In 1834 a correspondent of Mr. Owen's, whose communication, signed "J. C.," appeared in the *New Moral World*, in November of that year, proposed a "Floating Co-operative

[1] *New Moral World*, September 26, 1835.

Community," which was to have its station on the Thames, where it was thought the inhabitants would be safe from the extortions of retail traders, lodging-house keepers, and gin-shops. Convenient shops were to be selected where the families of the floating society could go on shore for the instruction of the children in horticulture, agriculture, and botany. "Community" coffee-houses existed in London in 1834. Co-operators were never deterred by poverty of means. A halfpenny a week land fund had its enthusiastic members and friends, who expected to join Mr. Disraeli's territorial aristocracy by patient subscriptions of two shillings and twopence a year.[1]

At 14, Charlotte Street, Fitzroy Square, was situated "The Institution" where Mr. Owen lectured every Sunday, and festivals and discussions were held on week-days. Socialism was always social. Its worst enemies could not deny this, and it first set the example of teaching working people to meet like ladies and gentlemen, on a pleasant equality, to abandon habits of isolation, sullenness, and conspiracy, and to chat, and sing, and dance, and think their way to schemes of competence. The *Poor Man's Guardian* of 1834, said, "We believe greater order or more genuine good feeling and politeness are not to be met with in any of the public assemblies in the metropolis or elsewhere." Considering that these assemblies were composed mainly of lodging-house keepers, newsvendors (who in those days were seldom long out of prison), grocers, tailors, costermongers, shoemakers, tallow-chandlers, and in some cases, as I know, sweeps, good people of conventional tastes were perplexed at this new species of association. It was not then understood that variety of industry was really the dress and decoration of the public service; and those who rendered none were merely nude and useless, and if they wilfully evaded work they were disreputable compared with those who lived by their honest labour. At length these assemblies commanded respect.

At the end of 1834 the first female co-operative association was formed. The object of the promotors was to form associative homes, and enable their members to acquire the art of living in contiguous dwellings. To raise funds these female

[1] *New Moral World*, No. 10, p. 64, December 20, 1834.

co-operators commenced selling tea and coffee, inviting the custom of the faithful to that end.

There were congratulations to the members of the Charlotte Street Institution on their having given spontaneous support to a grocery store, as it was in contemplation to open a meat-seller's store.

A French advocate of association, Mons. J. Gay, sent a letter by Dr. Bowring, in 1834, in which he described a plan of association which he had himself projected, and which was to consist of 12,000 souls. His dining-room was to be the size of the court of the Louvre, and capable of seating 12,000 guests—a very satisfactory dinner-party.

The "London weekly publication," as its advent was described, bore the title of the *New Moral World*. Its tone and terms were apostolic: otherwise its typographic style and appearance were inferior in quantity and quality of writing to the *Crisis*. It bore a proud, confident motto, which averred that "Silence will not retard its progress and opposition will give increased celerity to its movements." This was one of several famous sentences which Mr. Owen constructed. The great crisis of human nature, which was to take place in the fourth week in August, appears really to have come off, for the first serial number of the volume, appearing on Saturday, November 1, 1834,[1] declared in its opening sentence that "the Rubicon between the old world and the new moral worlds is finally passed."

These tidings were followed by twenty-one proofs of the principles and practices of the new state of things and were somewhat dull. The second number announced that "truth had at length gained the victory over error. Its reign upon earth had commenced, and would now prevail for evermore." The two volumes for 1835 and 1836 contained mainly papers by Mr. Owen.

Two pages of the *New Moral World* of 1835 contain the most intelligible and brief calculation of the material requirements in the way of agriculture, manufactures, and provisions for 500 persons of the working class which appears

[1] It was printed and published by Rowland Hunter, junr., at the office of the Association of All Classes of All Nations, 14, Charlotte Street Fitzroy Square.

in the records of these schemes. The proportions of persons were 110 men, 110 women, and 280 children, who were to occupy 1,000 English acres, upon part of which a village was to be built for their habitations.

Early in the year, owing to the excessive cold which prevailed in 1835, Mr. Owen ceased to lecture in the Charlotte Street Institution, and delivered his addresses in his chapel in Burton Street, Burton Crescent.

Early in 1834 Mr. Owen had proposed that the "Friends of the human race" should form "An Association of all Classes, and of all Nations." An elaborate scheme was published of this comprehensive society, of which Mr. Owen was to be the "preliminary father." This paternal authority published the long proposals for a "change of system in the British empire" which were duly offered to the Duke of Wellington's administration.

Notices were published that at one o'clock on the 1st of May, 1835, a great meeting would be held in the Charlotte Street Institution, when the superseding of the old world by the new would be made, and the contrast between them would be made evident.

The A.A.C.A.N. (Association of All Classes of All Nations), the great cosmopolitan device of 1835, was formed at this meeting, "to effect an entire change in the character and condition of the human race." Mr. Braby opened the proceedings and Mr. Owen took the chair. His speech occupied, when published, nearly two entire numbers of the *New Moral World*, long enough to weary both worlds at once, and would have affected the temper of all the nations together, had they been present. Nor did the trouble end there. One Mr. Charles Toplis, of Leicester Square, had conceived an infernal engine, a sort of Satanic mitrailleuse, which was to eject a thousand balls in the time one man could fire one. This he called "the Pacificator." Mr. Toplis had the wit to send an account of the horrible thing to Mr. Owen, who thought it something like an act of Providence that it should reach him just as he had finished writing his address, as it seemed to confirm the announcement he had made of the probable termination of war all over the world. Mr. Toplis had, Mr. Owen thought, made war impossible by multiplying the

powers of destruction; and he insisted upon the Toplis paper on "the Pacificator" being read, which being long must still have further wearied the Association of All Classes of All Nations. Indeed, the Toplis document was dull enough to have dispersed any army had it been read to them without any other application of "the Pacificator." The report says the meeting was numerous and respectable, but the only person of note who spoke at the end was Richard Carlile; he, however, was a man of historic powers of endurance.

A congress was announced to be held fourteen days later, to set the A.A.C.A.N. going, when Mr. Owen stated that he should retire from public life. On that day he would be 65 years of age. He said that he had, while he was wealthy, taken the precaution of making his wife and children sufficiently independent of his public proceedings, which always involved pecuniary loss. Mr. Richard Carlile made an eloquent speech on Mr. Owen's retirement from public life. Henceforth the lectures in the Charlotte Street Institution were given in the name of the A.A.C.A.N. Of course, Mr. Owen never retired, and public letters appeared every week from his pen; sometimes to Lord Brougham, at another time to Sir Robert Peel, and to Sir Edward Lytton Bulwer. Three months later Mr. Owen served upon a sub-committee with Thomas Attwood—a committee appointed of members of Parliament and others who had met at the Exchequer Coffee House, Palace Yard, to consider means of relieving the distress which then existed among the working class. Mr. Owen even wrote an address to the "Religious of all Denominations." Twelve months after his retirement, he was addressing letters to his Majesty William IV. from 4, Crescent Place, Burton Crescent.

In September, James Morrison, the editor of a trades-union journal called the *Pioneer*, died. He was the first platform and literary advocate of unionism, who obtained distinction for judicious counsel and a firmness made strong by moderation. He died prematurely through working beyond his strength. His widow was long known at the Social Institution, Salford, for activity and intelligence nearly equal to his own. She was one of the lecturers of the society.

This year some friends in Finsbury obtained possession of

Zebulon Chapel, in the Curtain Road, and converted it into an Eastern Associative Hall. It caused disquietude in certain quarters that "Zebulon" should become a social institution.

A Social Land Community Society was the quaint name of a scheme this year, which never got far beyond its name. We have known a good deal in London of co-operative tailors since "Alton Locke" appeared. In the "Social Land" year (1835); an association of the tailor craft conducted a business at 5, Brydges Street, Strand.

Mr. Owen's lectures on marriage, and that kind of perplexing thing, were first printed in volume one of the *New Moral World*, in 1835. Many thought them unfortunate in tone, terms, and illustrations; while those who thought ill of his objects found in them an armoury of weapons for assault which lasted them ten years. In the abstract pages of the *New Moral World*, the lectures were harmless and inaccessible, but some one had them reprinted in Leeds, and Mr. Joshua Hobson published them. It was then brought to light that the lectures were not verbatim, but made up of abrupt notes taken by a hearer. But Mr. Owen did not care to repudiate what he did not recognise. It did not need Mr. Owen to tell us that we cannot love whom we please: yet it continues true that we may all our lives remain pleased with those who allure us to like them. There are unsuitable marriages, when divorce is far more moral than association with hate. But in those days it was deemed sinful to think so.

The rubicon being passed so late as November 1, 1834, was followed on October 31, 1835, by the second volume of the *New Moral World*, which opened with the sub-title of the "Millennium." The full title read, "The New Moral World and Millennium." That hitherto evasive form of perfection had been secured. A junior member of the council of the A.A.C.A.N., unaware of it, delivered a lecture at the Charlotte Street Institution, on "Millennial Prospects."

A proposal was made for establishing co-operative Freemasonry, and a Lodge was determined upon, and the "punctual attendance of all the brothers was respectfully requested."

Trade unions and trade benefit societies took imposing titles. The printers, who acquire increase of sense by setting up the

sense of others, were first to have their Grand lodge, and schemes were published for establishing lodges in all nations of the world. An attendance of "all the Brothers" of the "Grand Lodge of Miscellaneous Operatives and Friends of Industry and Humanity" was called, in February, 1835. This catholic device certainly gave everybody a chance; for he must be very badly used by nature or circumstance who was not qualified to be classed among "miscellaneous" people.

Volume two of the *New Moral World* (1836) had a department called "Herald of Community," but the "Herald" was many years blowing his trumpet before forces appeared. Social reformers were always making "trumpet calls." In 1835 one W. Cameron, author of the first "Trumpet," announced a second, which he dedicated to Robert Owen, who certainly did not require it as his friends had a large stock.

About this time Mr. Owen became acquainted with a little book which afterwards made some noise, known as Etzler's "Paradise within the Reach of All Men." The great co-operator must have had some side of his nature open to wonder. The clever German undertook to put the whole world in ten years in a state of Paradise, which might be permanently maintained without human labour, or next to none, by the powers of nature and machinery. Etzler was a man who stood by the wayside of the world, and offered the philosopher's stone to any passer-by who would take it. "Look here," he cried in his preface, "ye philosophers, ye speculators, ye epicureans, behold a new, easy, straight, and short road to the summit of your wishes." By Mr. Etzler's invention the sea was to become a drawing-room, and the air a sort of upper chamber, for the accommodation of those who dwelt on the land. Mr. Owen regarded Etzler as a fellow-renovator of the universe, who had, in some wonderful way, got before him.

Now and then French Socialists contributed some astounding scheme of co-operative cooking, in a limited degree practicable, but was projected on a scale of magnitude which made it absurd. A proposal was made in Paris to supply the city with food by one immense *restaurateur*. One who had studied the project said, with something of the fervour of Mr. Etzler:

"Go and see it. There are Greek statues holding frying-pans, brilliant portraits of Lucullus, of Gargantua, Vatel, Caréme, and all the great men who have honoured universal gastronomy. There you will see the great cook, M. de Botherall, skimming his gigantic pot, his forehead enveloped with a cotton nightcap and a viscount's coronet. To prove the profits arising from the scheme he offers to wrap his cutlets for twelve days in bills of 1,000 francs each. In a short time the restaurative omnibuses will circulate through Paris. A cook will be upon the front seat, and a scullion behind. These vehicles will contain broth and sauce for the whole city. There will be the soup omnibus, the omnibus with made dishes, and the omnibus with roast meat, running together, after which will come the tooth-pick omnibus, and lastly the omnibus with the bill." This must have been ridicule, but social editors quoted it as one of the possible schemes of the time.

Ebenezer Elliott had, like the Chartists who came after him, a political distrust of social amelioration. In 1836 Elliott made a speech in Sheffield in favour of news-rooms, in which he stood up stoutly on behalf of political knowledge, and said, "Be not deluded by the Owens, the Oastlers, the Bulls, and the Sadlers, these dupes of the enemy."

In 1836, Mr. Owen published the book of the "New Moral World," which, while it animated his disciples by many observations which it contained, gave persons of any vivacity of temperament rather a distaste for that kind of existence. The phrase, "taxes on knowledge," so often heard twenty years later, appeared in the *New Moral World* in February, 1836, imported from the *London Review*.

Notices of co-operative societies grew fewer and fewer in volume two of the *New Moral World*, but we have announcements that the "Religion of the Millennium" is now ready, and may be had of the publishers. In volume four of the *New Moral World*, November, 1836, occurs a notable passage which illustrates how poor an opinion Mr. Owen entertained of Co-operation, which had excited so many hopes, and had been the subject of so many endeavours. He related that on his journey to New Lanark he passed through Carlisle. Devoting Tuesday and Wednesday "to seeing the friends of

the system, and those whom I wish to make its friends: to my surprise I found there are six or seven co-operative societies, in different parts of the town, doing well, as they think, that is, making some profit by joint-stock retailing. It is, however, high time to put an end to the notion very prevalent in the public mind, that this is the social system which we contemplate, or that it will form any part of the arrangements in the *New Moral World*.

Later, in December, a prospectus appeared of an intended Hall of Science in Brighton, prefixed by the phrase, "Science belongs to no party." This might be true, but there were certainly many parties who never had it. These halls of science were devoted not to physical but to social science.

Mr. J. Ransom, of Brighton, was one of six who wrote a letter to the *New Moral World*, proposing means of increasing the sale of the publication, and showing that the early interest which Brighton took in Co-operation was still sustained.

A writer in the *Radical*, a weekly stamped newspaper, addressed several brief, well-written letters to the working class on the means of obtaining equality. The writer took the signature of "Common Sense," and published his letters in dateless pamphlets; but I believe the *Radical* appeared in 1836. The most striking thing that "Common Sense" had to say was that "the besetting sin of the working people is their admiration of the unproductive classes, and their contempt and neglect of their own." It must be owned that during this period of departure from Co-operation to Socialism, the new adherents got a little absurd. Their styling Mr. Owen the "Preliminary Father," and addressing him, as Mr. Fleming did in public letters, as "Our dear Social Father," showed the infirmity of tutelage. They pulled themselves together a little towards the end of 1836, when they silenced the Millennium gong, and called their journal the *New Moral World and Manual of Science*.

The ecstatic term "Millennium" ceased, and "Manual of Science" succeeded it; but when, instead of lectures, songs, and religion of the new time, the reader was introduced to papers on "The Functions of the Spinal Marrow," the transition was very great. The editor of a "Manual of Science"

had no means of furnishing it. Science then was not the definite, mighty thing it now is. The British Association for advancing it was not born till four years later. The *Penny Magazine* people and the Chambers Brothers both excluded discussions on politics and religion from their pages, and the journals of the co-operators were the only papers of a popular character which dealt with religion and politics, and recognised science as one of the features of general progress. The little they did, therefore, passed for much and meant much in those days. It was a merit, and no small merit, to recognise science when it was deemed a form of sin. The volume bearing the sub-title of "Manual of Science" did something to sustain the profession by giving a page or more in each number upon subjects of physical science. In several towns, notably in Manchester, the Socialist party erected Halls of Science. There was an instinct that science was the available providence of man, and would one day be in the ascendant. The volumes of the *Moral World* at this time were devoid of advertisements. The editor withheld necessary information from his readers of public and other meetings to take place on behalf of their own principles. "We refrain, he said, "from making formal announcements, which by some persons might be mistaken for advertisements; we never deal in this kind of merchandise," as though publicity was merely venal.

Mr. J. L. Gay, of Paris, addressed a letter to Mr. Owen, from which it appeared that the French world-makers did not think so much of the English contrivance to that end. Mr. Gay reports, that the most rational St. Simonians and Fourierites refuse either to hear or read any exposition of Socialism; but they very sensibly demanded a practical trial of it. They would look at that. The French Socialists of Mr. Owen's school were then about to establish a "Maison Harmoniene de Paris" (House of Harmony at Paris).[1]

The fourth volume of the *New Moral World* was printed by Abel Heywood, of Manchester,[2] always known to Radicals and Social Reformers as a man of honour, of energy, and the chief Liberal publisher of Manchester, when that

[1] *New Moral World*, December 24, 1836, p. 66.

[2] Volume three had been printed by John Gadsby, of the same city. The price of each number of the fourth volume of the *New Moral World* was three halfpence. A number contained eight pages.

trade required not only business ability, but the courage of meeting imprisonment. Volume four was more belligerent than the previous one. The politicians united against a system which disregarded immediate political right, under the belief that a state of universal community would render rights unnecessary, or secure them in full; but community was distant, and the need of political liberty was near. One number of the *New Moral World* stated that "Mr. Hetherington, with the Radicals at his back, decried their proceedings." The *New Moral World* published an article from the *Shepherd*, stating that Mr. Owen had been to Paris, and found that "the French were looking beyond politics, and lucky would it be for us also if, instead of palavering with such trifles as ballots, and canvas, and law amendments, we were to cast this small-ware overboard, and raise one loud and universal shout of social reorganisation. This patching and mending system is a miserable delusion." Yet the same article recorded that Mr. Owen had been prevented lecturing in Paris by the police, lest he should excite commotion through the numbers he attracted. The fact was a prompt rebuke of the contemptuousness expressed as to political freedom. The "small-ware" had great value in practice. The editor of the *New Moral World* had published offensive and foolish articles himself, disparaging Radical politics.

In an article upon the name of the paper, the editor stated that he rejected the abandoned name of co-operator, the most sensible that had been adopted, and the members of the Grand Society of All Classes and All Nations wisely refused to be called Owenites, although they persisted in their affection for Mr. Owen, whom they designated at the same time their "social and right reverend father." At the Manchester Congress of All Classes of All Nations—at which only one class of one nation appeared, and a very small portion of that took part in the proceedings—they determined to call themselves Socialists. At this period, June, 1837, the *Moral World* was printed at Manchester, and then Mr. George Alexander Fleming became editor,[1] and also general secretary of the central board which had been formed. Henceforth the

[1] Mr. Fleming's editorship commenced June 10, 1837, and his resignation was dated from Avenue Cottage, Queenwood, November 8, 1845.

Moral World was edited with more controversial vigour, and with general energy and ability as a propagandist organ, but the last volume edited in London, the "Manual of Science" volume, was the most various and readable of the whole that had been published. It gave weekly a column taken from the "Daily Politician," composed of short passages of current political interest selected from the general newspaper press; notable sayings of philosophers, well-chosen anecdotes, extracts from books of mark and force, such as Mr. Mill's "History of British India," rendering that volume of the *N. M. W.* readable to this day.

"Live for others," that afterwards became the motto of the Comtean religion of humanity, was the subject of an editorial article in the *New Moral World* for January 21, 1837.

Mr. W. D. Saull, of London, announced that he had received Exchequer bills to the amount of £1,000, of which the interest was to be devoted to the purposes of an educational friendly society—£500 more were announced when Mr. Baume appeared at Bradford as a deputy representative of the society. His proceedings being reported in the *Northern Star*, and quoted in the *New Moral World*, the editor added a caution against confounding that project with the National Community Society, and professed doubts as to the practicability of the plan.

The *Star in the East* commenced in 1837. Its price was fourpence-halfpenny. It was a newspaper and stamped, and the first which professedly advocated social views. Its editor and proprietor, Mr. James Hill, of Wisbech, was a member of the distinguished Rowland Hill family, to whom the public has been indebted for so many national improvements.

The east and north had both *Stars*, edited by Hills. Both *Stars* arose in the same year. *The Northern Star* had Feargus O'Connor for proprietor, and Mr. Hill, an energetic Yorkshire schoolmaster, for editor, but no relative of Mr. Hill, of Wisbech. The northern luminary was political, being the organ of the Chartists, but always friendly to social ideas—both proprietors being community makers in their way; Mr. James Hill having a peculiar social theory of his own to work out at Wisbech, chiefly educational, after the genius of his family; Mr. O'Connor having a land scheme which, with the usual

talent of reformers for administering to the merriment of adversaries, he located, among other places, at Snig's End.

The Rev. Joseph Marriott, who represented Rochdale at the Manchester Congress of 1837, published a drama entitled "Community," which appeared in the *N. M. W.* Some of the predictions of telegraphic facilities which it contained are now seen realised in every street, which then only the Socialist imagination would incur the risk of regarding as a possibility of the future. The fact of to-day was a "craze" then.

The Rev. Mr. Marriott was a gentleman of far more enthusiasm on the whole than discernment, for he described Mr. Thompson's essay on "The Distribution of Wealth" as a work "as superior to Adam Smith's 'Wealth of Nations' as one book can be to another." The subject was certainly an important supplement to the great topic stated by Adam Smith, but the difference in the capacity and range of thought of the two writers ought to have been perceptible even to enthusiasm. Adam Smith traced the laws which were found to operate in commercial affairs. Mr. Thompson planned the laws which he thought ought to operate under circumstances which had never existed. Yet if the public read Mr. Thompson's book they would be of opinion "that there was something in it."

In June, 1838, the seat of social government and the journal of the society were removed to Bennett's Hill, Birmingham. Mr. Guest became the publisher; known as the leading Liberal publisher of the town, as Mr. Heywood was of Manchester. The printer was Francis Basset Shenstone Flindell, of 38, New Street, Birmingham. The editor announced that various considerations had induced the Central Board to limit the number of impressions to 2,000. One consideration determined it, and that was that they had no more purchasers. There arose in Birmingham several advocates. It was the residence of Mr. Pare, the earliest and ablest organiser of the movement, and Mr. Hawkes Smith, its most influential advocate through the press; and the town furnished two lecturers, Mr. Frederick Hollick and the present writer. Birmingham was long distinguished for its influence in co-operative things. There was also actively connected with the Central Board an Irish gentleman, Mr. John Lowther Murphy,

the author of several minor works of original merit—the best known being "An Essay Towards a Science of Consciousness." They were illustrated by diagrams, broadly designed, which had an air of ingenuity and newness. The argument was materialistic, put with boldness and with definiteness.

Occupying a professional position and having audacity in council and in action, Mr. Murphy was always a popular figure on the platform. Single, and a dentist in sufficient practice, no social persecution could reach him, since Christians with the toothache would waive any objection to his principles when he could afford them more skilful relief than any one else. In meetings of danger his courage was conspicuous and effective.

There is a conquest of conviction, and the leader herein was Mr. William Hawkes Smith, incomparably the wisest and most practical writer in defence of social views. He wisely maintained that the denunciation of religion was irrelevant to co-operative ends. His son, Mr. Toulmin Smith, became a man of eminence as a black-letter lawyer and author of remarkable works on municipal and parliamentary government.

A writer who really contributed accurate information on many subjects employed the instructive signature of a "Student of Realities," whose name was Vieussieu, a gentleman in official employment at Somerset House, whose sons after him took a generous and expensive interest in social progress.

In those days a small book was published separately called "Outlines of the Rational System and Laws of Human Nature." They were divided into five fundamental facts and Twenty Laws of Human Nature. Human nature in England was never so tried as it was during the first five years when these were discussed in every town in the kingdom. When a future generation has courage to look into this unprecedented code as one of the curiosities of propagandism, it will find many sensible and wholesome propositions, which nobody now disputes, and sentiments of toleration and practical objects of wise import.

The fifth volume of the *New Moral World* was enlarged to sixteen pages, and published at twopence. The phrase "Manual of Science" was now omitted. But it published

under the head of "Physical Science" Mr. Mackintosh's "Electrical Theory of the Universe." The volume showed a great increase in reports of propagandist lectures in numerous towns, and bore as its large-type title, the simple name of the *Moral World*, "New" being modestly subordinated.

"Labour's Wrongs and Labour's Remedy" is the name of an energetic little book by Mr. J. F. Bray. It was a good deal read by co-operators of the time.

There was a *Social Pioneer* that made its appearance in 1839, printed by Mr. A. Heywood, of Manchester. It was rather late in March, 1839, to bring out a *Social Pioneer*, thirty years after those operators had been in business. In October of the same year a more ambitious journal appeared, entitled the *Working Bee*, "printed by John Green, at the Community Press, Manea Fen, Cambridgeshire, for the Trustees of the Hodgsonian Community Societies." It took the usual honest and determined motto "He who will not work neither shall he eat;" but it turned out that those who did work did not get the means of eating, there being no adequate provision made for this at Manea Fen.

Volume six of the Socialist journal started with the full pretentious title of *The New Moral World*, and the ponderous sub-title of "Gazette of the Universal Community Society of Rational Religionists, enrolled under Acts of Parliament 10 George IV., c. 56, and 4 and 5 William IV., c. 40." This was the first time the movement put on a legal air. The sixth volume commenced in Leeds in July, 1838.

Volume seven also continued to represent the National Religionists of the Universal Community Society.

The eighth volume of the *Moral World* commenced a series of a larger size than had before appeared. It was as large as a moderate-sized newspaper, all in small type, and was the costliest weekly journal the co-operative party had yet commanded. The charge was threepence per number of sixteen pages, and was printed by Joshua Hobson, in Leeds, who was himself an author upon social and political questions, and was well known among the politicians of Chartist times as printer, and publisher also, of the *Northern Star*. The year 1840 was the culminating period of the Socialist advocacy. The expectation of a new community being near its establish-

ment brought an accession of writers to the *Moral World*; and the eighth volume was edited with spirit. The articles had a general and literary character.

In volume nine, which commenced January, 1841, the Rational Religionists still confronted the public on the title-page.

Volume ten was a serious issue, abounding in addresses and Congress reports, animated a little by reviews and accounts of provincial and metropolitan lectures. It commenced in July, 1841, and ended June, 1842. Never despairing, early in the volume, the editor again commenced to give directions how to obtain the millennium, although it had arrived and had had its own way some years previously. In October, 1841, the printing of the *Moral World* was brought back to London after wandering in the wilderness of Manchester, of Birmingham, and of Leeds five years.

The eleventh volume let slip one of its anchors. It began with the simpler sub-title "Gazette of the Rational Society." The Rational Religionists peremptorily disappeared. Whether they had sworn themselves into disrepute, they having taken to oath-taking, or found it onerous to maintain its clerical pretensions which raised the very questions of religious controversy which it was the duty of the society to avoid, was never explained.

The twelfth volume continued to mankind the comfort of knowing that there was in their midst one "Rational Society." Of course the meaning was that the society aimed at promoting rational conditions of life, and it was well that there should be some persons pledged to find out these conditions if possible. But unfortunately the name did not represent the aspiration, but seemed to express the fact; and "Rational Society" was not a fortunate term.

The thirteenth volume of the *New Moral World*, the largest and last of the official issue, commenced on June 29, 1844. The end, for a time, of all things communistic was then casting its ominous shadows before. In February, 1845, this journal was first printed at the Community Press, by John Melson, for the governor and company of Harmony Hall, Stockbridge, Hants. The last number printed there appeared on August 23, 1845. The type was sold, and bought by Mr.

James Hill, who bought also the second title "Gazette of the Rational Society." Mr. Hill contended that he had bought the copyright of the paper. The title *New Moral World* Mr. Owen claimed as his copyright, and by arrangement with him, a further volume was commenced, under the title of the *Moral World*, the word "New" was omitted, and it appeared under the further editorship of Mr. Fleming. The result was that on August 30, 1845, two *Moral Worlds* again appeared, the old one being the new and the new one the old; Mr. Fleming editing the *Moral World*, which Mr. Owen retained, and Mr. Hill editing the *New Moral World*, which he had bought. Mr. Hill's *New Moral World* continued to January, 1846, when he merged it into a new paper entitled the *Commonweal*. It ought to have borne the title of the Commonsqueal, for it shrieked. Under the words, "Gazette of the Rational Society," which Mr. Hill retained, was printed Mr. Owen's motto: "Any general character, from the best to the worst, may be given to any community by the application of proper means, which are to a great extent under the control of those who have influence in the affairs of men." Underneath this Mr. James Hill placed his rival and refutatory motto: "It must certainly then be concluded that 'proper means' have not been applied, since such means to a great extent have been 'under the control' of Mr. Owen and those who have had influence in the affairs of the Rational Society." Mr. Hill himself had been an educational and social reformer of no mean note in his time. His *Star in the East* had been a journal of great interest and great instruction, but he had a faculty for vigorous and varied disputation, which grew by what it fed upon. He was a writer of ability and flexibility, who attacked with great celerity any one who dissented from him; and if disputation could be entertaining of itself the new issue in his alien hands would have been the most alluring of the series.

The fourteenth volume of the *Moral World* suspended the profession of being the gazette of the Rational Society, which it appears was after all a saleable title, since Mr. Hill certainly bought and continued to use it, long after the society was practically extinct. Mr. Fleming described his new volume as the "advocate of the Rational System of Society, as founded

by Robert Owen." It was printed by McGowan and Company, the printers of the *Northern Star*, in London. Only eleven numbers of this volume were issued.

The close of 1845 and the early months of 1846 introduced to the social reader a new journal, bearing the ambitious and provoking title of the *Herald of Progress*. Mr. John Cramp was the projector and editor of it. The present writer was one among the contributors after it commenced.

During these later years there was collateral activity in social literature in several quarters, but Co-operation seldom attracted attention. Mr. Frederick Bate published in 1841 a play, in five acts, entitled "The Student." Mr. Goodwyn Barmby, a poet who possessed real lyrical power, an advocate of original tastes, hung up his hat in the social hall, where no hat save his could hang. He married "Kate," the clever correspondent of the *New Moral World*. Mr. Barmby founded a Communist church, and gave many proofs of boldness and courage. He and Dr. George Bird, who afterwards obtained professional eminence in medicine, issued a prospectus of the London Communist Propagandist Society. Dr. Bird contributed the best literary reviews which appeared in social publications of the day. Mr. Lewis Masquerier, of New York, was a frequent correspondent, known from 1836 as a fertile and original author of social works, and was distinguished as a leader of the land reformers of America, who took for their motto certain famous words from Jefferson, namely, "The mass of mankind has not been born with saddles on their back, for a favoured few booted and spurred, ready to ride them legitimately by the grace of God."

In 1840 the Fourierites established in London a paper called the *Morning Star*, edited by Mr. Hugh Doherty, a writer who had puzzled the readers of the *Moral World* through many a wearying column. He entitled his journal *A Phalansterian Gazette of Universal Principles and Progressive Association*. Its sources of authority were the book of Scripture and the book of Nature. Dr. Doherty published works of value afterwards to those who accept Fourierist principles.

In 1842 a magazine, entitled *The Union, and Monthly Record of Moral, Social, and Educational Progress*, was edited by Mr. G. A. Fleming. It contained papers from the fertile and

ingenious pen of "Pencil'em," by January Searle, Charles Lane, Charles Bray, and a writer who used the name of Arthur Walbridge, who wrote a story of "Torrington Hall," and a very suggestive book on "Social Definitions"; and anonymous papers by eminent and popular writers, whose names the editor suppressed on the uninteresting principle that truth should stand unsupported by names which might induce people to look at it. Reformers in those days took pride in adopting all the means they could to prevent the truth they had in hand becoming popular, and then complained that it had few friends.

In 1843 there appeared a publication entitled the *New Age*, a less pretentious title than the *New Moral World*. The *New Age* was also called the *Concordian Gazette*. It represented a small band of mystics, who were inspired by James Pierrepont Greaves, one of whose doctrines was, "as man cannot do right when he himself is wrong, a right nature must be superadded to him in order to establish right institutions in society." One of the conditions, as Mr. Greaves would say, were pure air, simple food, exercise, and cold water, which he contended were much more beneficial to man than any doctrinal creeds, or churches, chapels, or cathedrals. Mr. Greaves was seldom so clear and intelligible as this. He was himself the most accomplished, pleasant, and inscrutable mystic which this country has produced. He possessed competence, which enables a man to be unintelligible and yet respected. An American gentleman, Mr. H. G. Wright, who was a natural Greaves, described him as possessed of "a lofty forehead, a well-defined contour, a nose inclined to the aquiline, a deep, sonorous, slightly nasal voice, a stature rather above the middle height, and a marvellous eye. Mystery, God, Fathomlessness, all were written upon him." A man of mark, after his kind, it must be owned.

The disciples of Mr. Greaves took premises at Ham Common, in Surrey, which they called Alcott House. The society was called the First Concordian. It was also the last. Their two best writers were Charles Lane, who dated from Concord, Massachusetts, and Goodwyn Barmby. The *New Age*, its organ, was very intelligently edited, but was discontinued when it had existed little more than a year and a half, on the

ground that "no book could represent what was passing in that establishment. Even the proceedings of a single day were found to be of far greater moment than could be transcribed or recorded in any work whatever." Those who visited the Concordian were certainly not of this opinion. The inmates were scrupulously clean, temperate, transcendental, offensive to any one who ate meat, attached to Quakers, especially white ones, repudiated even salt and tea, as stimulants, and thought most of those guests who ate their cabbage uncooked. They preached abstinence from marriage, and most things else. Their cardinal doctrine was that happiness was wrong. The managing director, Mr. William Oldham, was called Pater, and, like Howard, preferred damp sheets to dry ones. Mr. Lane invited the Pater to join the Shakers at Harvard, Massachusetts, where he would find no want of liberty to carry out his self-denying plans to the utmost. A very little liberty is sufficient to do nothing in, and a very small space would have enabled the society to carry out its only experiment, which consisted in standing still in a state of submission to the Spirit until it directed them what to do. Mr. Greaves' disciples, however, had the great merit of pausing before they did anything until they had found out why they should do it, a doctrine which would put a stop to the mischievous activity of a great many people, if thoughtfully followed.

So late as 1843 Mr. G. A. Fleming and Mr. Lloyd Jones opposed the Anti-Corn Law League. An active representative of the school, Mr. Ironside, a well-known partisan of Socialism in Sheffield, reported on one occasion that he had been to hear Dr. Smiles, editor of the *Leeds Times*, lecture on Complete Suffrage, and "was at a loss to imagine how Socialists could waste their time in listening to expositions of such petty measures as these."

The Central Board issued charters authorising the foundation of branches in the different towns, when satisfied as to the zeal and respectability of the parties making application for them; which long hung up in places of honour in some of the old halls. Occasionally a grand notification was made to the branches of the Association of All Classes of All Nations, and to all others whom it might concern, running thus: "Whereas, the Congress of the Association [with the far-reaching name]

did, for the more extensive and systematic diffusion of the social principles, divide Great Britain and Ireland into certain districts with missionary stations; and whereas a memorial has been presented to the Central Board from the branch of the Association, situate at Sheffield, requesting that that town may be made a missionary station, and that a district may be assigned for the labours of the missionary. Now, therefore, we, the Central Board, in pursuance and by virtue of the power and authority vested in us by the Congress, and in consideration of the memorial hereinbefore mentioned, do hereby make the following revision of the districts: that is to say, the town of Sheffield, and generally that part of the county of York not included in the Leeds district, to be taken from the Manchester district; the towns of Derby and Nottingham, and generally the county of Nottingham, and that part of the county of Derby north of a line drawn immediately south of the town of Derby, to be taken from the Birmingham district; and the county of Lincoln to be taken from the London district; and, further, we do hereby order and determine that the counties and parts of counties and towns so taken from the said districts shall constitute a new district, to be called the Sheffield district, which shall comprise :—

Sheffield	Spalding	Ashbourn
Rotherham	Market Deeping	Belper
Doncaster	Bourn	Wirksworth
Barnsley	Folkingham	Cromford
Thorn	Grantham	Alfreton
Barton-upon-Humber	Lincoln	Mansfield
Great Grimsby	Gainsborough	Bakewell
Louth	East Retford	Buxton
Market Rasen	Newark	Dionfield
Boston	Nottingham	Chesterfield
Holbeach	Derby	Worksop"

This was the extent of my diocese when I was appointed Social Missionary for Sheffield.

Then they did "furthermore order and determine" certain other things, not necessary here to recite. All this legal pomposity could never have been of Birmingham growth. The board there had acquired a Mr. Bewley, as a secretary, a gentleman of capacious ways, who might have inspired those extraordinary terms. The enumeration of places which comprised the district of Sheffield was, however, real. There was

work doing and to be done there. It was no uncommon thing to meet in social literature a protestation that "we must not be understood as advocating any *sudden* changes."[1] Seeing how limited was its means there was no possible danger in their peremptory efforts.

A disastrous peculiarity in advocacy, by which the pages of co-operative journals were disfigured, was that of quoting the most offensive things said against the doctrines and advocates of its own party. The enemy never did that by them; but this fact never instructed them. The information the Socialist editors were able to give their readers was not much. They could seldom afford to pay the printer for what they did give; and yet they went to the expense of reprinting and circulating among their own adherents the most unpleasant imputations which embittered wit could make against them. All timid adherents were alarmed when they saw these things. Half-informed adherents could not possibly tell what answer could be made; and prudent readers withdrew at once from a cause against which such imputations were being made, and which they were called upon to circulate among their own family and friends. Sharp-witted adversaries had every encouragement to go on, multiplying their accusations, the publications, and exhaust all the means of the society in publishing effective disparagements of itself. The outside public possessed writers more numerous and skilful than these semi-penniless reformers could command. Such, however, was their infatuation that they not only suffered the sharpshooters of the enemy to take aim at their own readers from their own pages, but allowed the rabble of evangelical pamphleteers and tract writers to possess their gates, and to pelt them with mud and stones.

On one occasion the editor, Mr. Fleming, having made a vehement comment upon the Manea Fen scheme, afterwards expressed his regret in a very manly way that he had violated the pacific principles imposed by Socialism upon its representatives. Imputative terms were often applied to opponents. From some, it was said, "the truth was not to be expected." Charges of "dishonesty," of "wilful misrepresentation" were made, which obliges all the friends a man of honour has to come forward in his personal defence; and enables all the

[1] "Outlines of Various Social Systems," 1844.

friends a scoundrel has to intrude themselves in the controversy. Nevertheless, it ought to be said, as it honestly may, to the credit of the social party, that though its leaders lacked a clear grasp of principles of neutrality in invective, it was only on great provocation that they spoke ill of others. Compared with the vituperation and personalities of every other party, political and religious, of their day, they were examples of forbearance to adversaries, who showed them no quarter. A page of laughter is a better defence against a worthless adversary than a volume of anger. Terms which impute want of honour to others, or accuse them of conscious untruth, dishonesty, or bad motives, are charges with which the judge and not the journalist may deal.

When one person makes imputations of dishonesty upon another, the only legitimate notice is to kick him, and nobody ought to make these imputations unless he is prepared for that operation being performed upon him; and no editor ought to permit such imputations unless he is prepared to recognise that form of reply.

Many things, social, polemical, and progressive, with which society now concerns itself, appears to have begun in one or other co-operative publications; or if not originated were espoused, and publicity accorded, when they were denied any hearing elsewhere.

Abram Combe called his organ of Orbiston the *Register of the Adherents of Divine Revelation.* The editor said that "Abram Combe was perfectly right in adopting whatever name he thought proper, as a free and unbiassed expression of his conscientious opinions." [If Mr. Combe's object was not to establish a public community for public advantage, but simply a group of persons for the profession of Combism—he was right, but the universality of communism was gone.] The editor added, "We are great lovers of candour and moral courage." Yet the editor, Mr. Fleming, abandoned (when imprisonment overtook them) two social missionaries, the present writer being one, Mr. Charles Southwell, of spirited memory, was the other. I was put upon my trial for delivering a lecture in Cheltenham upon "Home Colonies." It was never pretended by the witnesses that the lecture was otherwise than neutral, and it was admitted by the judge, Mr. Justice

Erskine, that no remark whatever was made in it which transgressed the proper limits of the subject. In the town of Cheltenham, in which it occurred, a small Socialist poet, one Mr. Sperry, suspected of heresy, had been induced to recant, and had then been naturally abandoned and despised by those who had promised him advantage if he did so. This affair had produced an impression in the town that Socialist speakers were wanting either in courage or honesty, and the same feeling existed in other towns. The Bishop of Exeter had really frightened many. When Mr. Pare was forced to resign the registrarship of Birmingham, it became a question with other gentlemen, who held official situations, how far they were prudent in standing connected with this party. The Central Board began, under alarm, to urge the policy of theological neutrality, which they ought to have adopted earlier on principle. Some of the missionaries took a running leap into the clerical ranks, upon which they had so long made war. They obtained licenses as preachers, and advertisements were issued, setting forth that lectures would be delivered to the Societies of the Rational Religionists, by the "Rev. B. Swearatlast" and the "Rev. J. Swearatonce." As the gifts of these gentlemen were not understood to lie in this direction, this step caused scandal. When, at the Cheltenham lecture referred to, a question was put by one of the audience, having a theological object, I gave a definite and defiant answer, which, at least in that place, restored the reputation of Socialist speakers for uncalculating explicitness. Neither the trial and imprisonment which followed, nor the parliamentary proceedings in reference to it, were ever mentioned in the *New Moral World*. Room was found for articles on "Chinese Manure" and the "Sense of Beauty," but in its Samaritan pages no reference was made to the missionary, who had literally "fallen among thieves" in the discharge of his official duty. Mr. Owen, the president, had said to the Congress, only a month before, "When we are questioned on any subject, we should declare what convictions we are obliged to have. Such is the ground I mean to take. What I have told you is my determination, and, though not a single individual go with me, I shall pursue the same course."[1] A special Congress was held during the imprisonment of the

[1] *New Moral World*, May 28, 1841.

missionary lecturer in Gloucester Gaol, and no allusion was made, no resolution proposed respecting him. The Central Board addressed weekly its "Friends, Brothers, and Sisters" upon many subjects, but they never suggested that some help might be needed in a certain household, though the subscription of a penny a day, by the members of the board, would have saved one young life in it.

What was wanted was neither defiance nor compliance, unless there was a change of conviction. Then a manly and explicit retraction of what errors the convert supposed himself to have held was due as an act of honour; so that the abandoned opinions might no longer possess the influence, whatever it might be, that his authority and example could be considered to lend to them.

The Hall of Science, in Manchester, was registered in the Bishop's Court as a place of worship belonging to a body of Protestant Dissenters called "Rational Religionists," and by that means it was brought under the Act of Parliament which licensed it to be open for divine worship. This Act rendered all who officiated in the building liable to be called upon to take the following oath :—

I solemnly declare, in the presence of Almighty God, that *I am*

First. A Christian, and

Second. A Protestant; that as such, *I believe*

Third. The scriptures of the New and Old Testament, commonly received among the Protestant churches, do *contain* the revealed Word of God; and that I do receive

Fourth. The same as the *rule* of my *doctrine* and *practice.*

Mr. Swearatlast (Robert Buchanan) took this oath in Manchester. Mr. Maude, the magistrate, who administered it, first demanded to know whether this was an oath binding on his conscience, and whether he really believed in a future state after death of rewards and punishments? This missionary, who had been several years lecturing against every one of these points, as one of the expounders of "truth without mystery, mixture of error, or the fear of man," replied that he did believe in all these things, and that the oath was binding upon his conscience. The Central Board never repudiated the missionaries who thus lied in open court before the whole

city. Indeed, the editor of the *New Moral World* justified it, and stated that he would take it. Mr. Buchanan had sufficient self-respect to make scruples about it. He was anxious to prove to the court that he had a conscience, and to stand well before the public; and the court was adjourned to give him time to make up his mind. On Tuesday, August 11, 1840, he appeared, took the oath, and made the declaration under 19th George II., c. 44, and received his certificate of having done so.[1] Mr. Fleming so far respected the moral sense of his readers of the *Moral World* as never to publish this discreditable scene. Mr. Swearatonce (Mr. Lloyd Jones) gave his own account of how he went through the part on February 13, 1841, in Bristol. "On Tuesday I attended at one o'clock for the purpose of taking the oath. The office was crowded by gentlemen who seemed anxious to see the performance. It passed off very comfortably. I took it without any words. I am now, therefore, the REV. LLOYD JONES." The small capitals are the "REV." gentleman's and the word "performance" too.[2]

Other gentlemen than those who were present long remembered these scenes reported in the press. Many years after, when the present writer was concerned in getting the Secular Affirmation Bill passed through Parliament, Sir George Cornewall Lewis demanded, reproachfully (looking at me as I sat in the gallery of the House of Commons as he spoke), "Where are your cases? Where are the men of honour who refuse the oath? It is your free-thinker who takes it 'without any words.'"

Those of us who had consented to act as missionaries were in some sort, in our secular way, apostles of a new state of society, which, we weekly assured the public by the title of our accredited journal, was to be at least "moral," if not otherwise notable. Then it did not become any of us—so it seemed to me and my colleagues of the protesting school—to

[1] *Sun*, August 14, 1840.

[2] These proceedings made Mr. Southwell indignant, and being a man of fiery courage, he wrote an article in the *Oracle of Reason* (started as a protest against the *New Moral World* policy of the day), which caused his imprisonment for twelve months. He intended to defy prosecution; and Sir Charles Wetherall, who was his judge, was a man quite ready to meet him half-way in supplying it. Mr. Southwell was imprisoned in Bristol and I in Gloucester Gaol.

fall, in self-respecting honour, below those other apostles with whose teaching we were in many respects "non-content." Though sincerity does not imply errorlessness, it gives dignity to those who profess error honestly. The Christian apostles had this personal dignity. It seemed to me, for one, that we had no moral right to dissent from them publicly, were we content to advance our cause by meaner means than theirs. We could not be their equals in advantage. Our inspiration was not owing to contact with a celestial teacher: but it was in our power to be their equals in honesty, and refuse to profess the opinions we did not hold, whatever peril, or personal loss, or social discomfort followed. We were to teach "truth without mixture of error." Even when we follow mathematical truth—dealing with definite and palpable magnitude—we travel but a short way, into the realms of certainty; while in moral and social things—where "sense is narrow and reason frail"—who can fathom truth without error; or escape the need of hourly precaution, qualification, and moderation? We were to teach "without fear of man." That was the one thing possible in the humblest advocates. Fearlessness of man—in the discharge of the duty of speaking in the spirit of relevance, conceding the same freedom to others—that was within our power. To fail herein before the world, in the publicity of a court of law, where persecution gave us the priceless opportunity of winning respect, seemed alike a failure of policy and honour.

He has no claim to free speech unless his object is to utter true speech and to maintain veracity among the people by example. Though I never took an oath of any kind in my life, since I could not take it in the sense in which the court administered it, yet I am no fanatic against oaths, and respect those who take them sincerely. The common instinct of society respects the memory of those poor and humble religionists of despised sects, who, having hardly any grace but that of sincerity, have suffered torture and death rather than say the thing which was not. Socialists who professed to introduce a higher morality were bound to set an equal example. Addison usefully tells us of Euripides that: "The great tragic poet, though famous for the morality of his plays, had introduced a person who, being reminded of an oath he had taken,

replied, '*I swore with my mouth, but not with my heart.*' The impiety of this sentiment set the audience in an uproar; made Socrates (though an intimate friend of the poet) go out of the theatre with indignation, and gave so great offence that he was publicly accused and brought upon his trial, as one who had suggested an evasion of what they thought the most holy and indissoluble bond of human society, so jealous were these virtuous heathens of any the smallest hint that might open a way to perjury."

It was to the credit of Socialism that the oath-taking related led to a schism in the party. Undoubtedly we did harm of one kind—at the time. In setting up a new camp we weakened the force which held the recognised co-operative fort; and those who may be influenced by our example should weigh well the responsibility we incurred, and be satisfied whether we were justified in our course before they imitate us.

Others, as stout Mr. Finlay, of Edinburgh, and Mr. Paterson, then of the same city, Mr. Adams and Mrs. Adams, of Cheltenham, not missionaries but of the party, underwent imprisonment on the same account. Dr. Watts, Mr. Jeffery, and Mr. Farn, who were all missionaries, rendered every help in their power to sustain the protesters. Mrs. Emma Martin fearlessly aided. Nor will I omit to mention, with what honour I can, my untiring friends in the Gloucester affair—Maltus Questell Ryall, a man remarkable alike for ability and courage, and William Chilton also. Both cared for Socialist honour; no personal peril intimidated them from vindicating it.

It was the intention of the opponents of the propagation of social views to close the halls by forcing the oath described upon the lecturers. The Rev. Mr. Kidd, and some other divines, took the step of indicting the owners of the halls for receiving money for admission at the doors. As the partisans of Co-operation were not wealthy, and incurred expense beyond their means in disseminating their views, it was only by taking admission money at the doors, that they could maintain their advocacy. The clergy knew this, and calculated that if they could prevent admission money being taken, they would succeed in closing the hall. It was a shabby, but a well-calculated proceeding. Accordingly, they did lodge an

indictment against the hall owners in Manchester, for receiving money at the doors. They found an Act of Parliament of the reign of George III. (fruitful in infamous Acts), which levied serious fines upon the conductors of halls if money was taken at the door on the Sunday, unless such hall was licensed as a place of worship. The Rev. Mr. Kidd's prosecution failed, the directors producing a license which described it as the authorised place of worship of the Rational Religionists. But, as the speakers in a licensed hall must be licensed preachers, Mr. Kidd next prosecuted the lecturer at the hall, who, we have seen, eventually took the oath. Mr. Kidd thus triumphed.

In various halls in the country to this day money is taken without their being licensed, and addresses are delivered by lecturers who never took any oath as preachers ; but, owing to the ignorance or generosity of the clergy, no legal steps are taken against them, which, if taken, must have the effect of degrading the speaker or closing their proceedings. These Georgian Acts are still in existence, and persons of pernicious intent still put them in force. A few years since eminent scientific teachers in London, Huxley among them, were prevented by them from instructing the people on the Sunday. The Aquarium at Brighton was closed by them on the same day ; and in no Co-operative Hall is it legal to take money for lectures or even a tea-party on the Sunday, and the most valued forms of co-operative life are arrested by those clerical laws. Thus Co-operation has not only to be judged by what it has done, but what it has been prevented doing.

Amid the crowds of incidents and of persons, in connection with this movement, many remain unnamed lest the weight of detail oppress the reader. Where two events or two persons equally serve to explain the story, like the two women grinding at the same mill, one is taken, and the other left.

CHAPTER X

THE LOST COMMUNITIES

"Seeing that human society labours under a chronic want of disinterestedness and mutual consideration on the part of its members, there is a demand for select or heightened pictures of love, devotedness, and sympathy, as an ideal compensation."—PROFESSOR BAIN.

IT is a long time since Joseph de Maistre declared that "the human race was created for a few, that it is the business of the clergy and the nobility to teach the people that which is evil and good in the moral world, and that which is true and false in the intellectual world. Other men have no right to reason upon such things: the people must suffer without murmuring." In these days the people decline to suffer. They resent the infliction of suffering upon them. They see that the inequalities of nature are made greater by the wilful contrivances of men. The people protest against inferiority being imposed upon them. They see that some men by opportunity, energy, and enterprise are able to forfend themselves against suffering. The people endeavour to equalise opportunities for themselves by the establishment of communities. Though they have not much to show for their efforts, they set a self-helping example. Their failures are not to be mourned over, but imitated. France, which for years held political supremacy in Europe, lost it by the conspiracy of an imperial adventurer, who happened to possess a talent for assassination.

Though France, in its own brilliant and insurgent way, has borne the palm of distinction for the propagandism of social reform, England in a quieter way has shown the capacity for comprehending equality. A distinguished lawyer, who had

great knowledge of the municipal history of his country, the late Toulmin Smith, of Birmingham, in his great book on the "History of Early English Guilds," traced the social features of English life with a research in which he had no compeer. His daughter, Lucy Toulmin Smith, in the befitting preface which she supplies to her father's work, states that the early "English guild was an institution of local self-help which, before Poor Laws were invented, took the place, in old times, of the modern friendly or benefit society, but with a higher aim. It joined all classes together in a care for the needy and for objects of common welfare."

"Guilds," says this authoress, "were associations of those living in the same neighbourhood, and remembering that they have, as neighbours, common obligations, regarding love to one's neighbour, not as a hollow dogma of morality, but known and felt as a habit of life."

It is also worthy of notice in these days, in which we flatter ourselves that social reform is being born—that there were "scarcely five out of the five hundred gilds known to history which were not formed equally of men and of women." The British Association for the Advancement of Science has admitted ladies to read papers at its meetings. This has been counted an astonishing step. It is creditable, but not astonishing, seeing that in the old social days English women were counted upon to take part in the civil progress of the city. Many women who take part in these movements think it a new thing; and many more, who stand aloof, think it unwomanly, not knowing that they are merely the degenerate daughters of noble mothers who thought it their duty to take a public part in the duties of society.

In 1870 the Deputy Johann Jacoby, addressing his constituents in the Second Arrondissement of Berlin, said: "The great end before the people is the abolition of the wage system, and the substitution in its place of co-operative labour." The late Mr. Frederick Cowell Stepney, a great friend of British and foreign workmen, said, in their behalf, that "The emancipation of the working classes must come from the working classes themselves. The struggle for the emancipation of the workman is not a struggle for class privileges, but for the obliteration of all class dominion. It is, therefore, worth while

looking a little at some Lost Communities, whose romantic story has instruction and encouragement in it.

When the tireless Welsh reformer, of whom we have spoken, was one day dining at the house of a Frankfort banker, he met a renowned German statesman, Frederick Von Gentz. "I am in favour of seeing a social progress commence," said Mr. Owen, "for if union could replace disunion, all men would have a sufficiency." "That is very possible," replied Von Gentz; "but we by no means wish that the masses should become at ease and independent of us. All government would then be impossible." This was the old idea of the higher classes. Every one sees now that government will never be secure until competence and independence are enjoyed by the people.

When the term "Social Science" was first employed in England it sounded as the most visionary word dreaming philosophy had suffered to escape in its sleep. Statesmen had none of that quality which scientific men call prevision—a compassing foresight, seeing what ought to happen, and taking care that it should happen. Society was a sort of legally arranged blunder, the costly device of public incompetence. We are still in that state that Fourier used to call our "incoherent civilisation." It is from this that community contrivers strive to deliver us.

A Pantisocracy was the idea of cultivated men, a name derived from Greek words, implying a state in which all govern and all serve. This is one of the prettiest definitions of association extant. Communities on a superstitious basis have hitherto been the most successful. It is easier to trust in what you are told than to find out what you ought to trust in. Science is the latest born power of the understanding. The knowledge of it, belief in it, the use of it, and the trust in it, are of slow growth. Reality seems to be the last thing men learn. When they do come to comprehend its nearness, its importance, its influence over their destiny, men will avail themselves of its teachings. There will be heard then from platform and pulpit words of passion, of power, of fiery counsel, such as fitful, fluctuating belief in unseen influences have never yet called forth.

It is quite true, as Italians say, "he who has a partner has a

master"; and this is true of marital partnership, yet men and women enter gladly into it. All association is sacrifice of minor things for the attainment of greater. In religious societies sacrifice is made by authority, in secular association the authority is common sense, and that is not common. The reason of every great step has to be made plain to the general understanding. As intelligence increases association becomes more possible. Co-operation to the extent it now prevails was impossible, until later years. Association is still an almost unknown art. Religious communists have sought peace and plainness, security and competence. Secular communists seek peace and art, intelligence and prosperity. Intelligent individuality will exceed anything hitherto realised by communities of mere industry and faith.

One who gave the English people the earliest and the first unprejudiced account of American communities, Harriet Martineau, says: "If such external provision, with a great amount of accumulated wealth besides, is the result of Co-operation and community of property among persons so ill prepared for its production as these, what might not the same principles of association achieve, among a more intelligent set of people, stimulated by education, and exhilarated by the enjoyment of all the blessings which Providence has placed within the reach of man? If there had been no celibacy amongst them they would probably have been much more wealthy. The truth of these positions cannot be doubted by any who have witnessed the working of the co-operative system. *It can never now rest till it is made matter of experiment.*"[1]

Communities are, as yet, in their infancy. There are two causes which account for the failure of many of them.

First. The want of sufficient capital to maintain the place for a few years on a frugal scale, until the members could be trained in self-supporting efficiency.

Second. Members were not picked men, nor pledged to obey the authority established among them, and readily removable if unsuitable.

Schemes of social life require the combination of means and intelligence, and have to be attempted many times before they

[1] Society in America.

succeed. Could the present railway system have been perfected in the minds of inventors at the beginning of the century, it could not have been got into work, for no workmen were to be had of sufficient skill to make the engines or conduct the traffic.

The most sensible account given of the English system by a foreigner is that which Buonarroti made at the end of his long life in a letter to Mr. Bronterre O'Brien.

"Babeuf," he said, "attempted to combine a numerous people into one single grand community; Owen would multiply in a country small communities, which, afterwards united by a general bond, might become, as it were, so many individuals of one great family. Babeuf wished his friends to seize on the supreme authority, as by its influence he hoped to effectuate the reforms they had projected; Owen calculated on success by preaching and by example."

Mr. David Urquhart, a writer who never fails to interest the reader, and to whom the public are indebted for much out-of-the-way knowledge, gave in his work on "Turkey and its Resources," in 1833, a remarkable account of the great Co-operative Society of Ambelakia, whose varied activity was a miracle of co-operative sagacity. It would have continued had there been a court of law in which questions in dispute could be speedily and cheaply settled. It has been the fate of Co-operation often to be, not only before its time, but before the law.

"Ambelakia," says Mr. Urquhart, "is the name of a spot overlooking the Vale of Tempe, where an extraordinary association had a brilliant existence of twenty years. . . . I extract," says Mr. Urquhart, "from Beaujour's 'Tableau du Commerce de la Grecque' the details he has preserved respecting it, in as far as they were confirmed to me by the information I obtained on the spot.

"Ambelakia, by its activity, appears rather a borough of Holland than a village of Turkey. This village spreads, by its industry, over the surrounding country, and gives birth to an immense commerce which unites Germany to Greece. Its population has trebled in fifteen years, and amounts at present (1798) to 4,000, who live in their manufactories like swarms of bees in their hives. The Ambelakiot faces are serene; the

slavery which blasts the plains watered by the Penens, and stretching at their feet, has never ascended the sides of Pelion (Ossa); and they govern themselves, like their ancestors, by their protoyeros (primates, elders), and their own magistrates. Twice the Mussulmans of Larissa attempted to scale their rocks, and twice were they repulsed by hands which dropped the shuttle to seize the musket.

"Every arm, even those of the children, is employed in the factories; whilst the men dye the cotton, the women prepare and spin. There are twenty-four factories. This yarn found its way into Germany, and was disposed of at Buda, Vienna, Leipsic, Dresden, Anspach, and Bareuth. The Ambelakiot merchants had houses of their own in all those places. These houses belonged to distinct associations at Ambelakia. The competition thus established reduced very considerably the common profits; they proposed, therefore, to unite themselves under one central commercial administration. The lowest shares in this joint-stock company were between £600 and £700, and the highest were restricted, that the capitalists might not swallow up all the profits. The workmen subscribed their little profits, and, uniting in societies, purchased single shares; and besides their capital, their *labour was reckoned* in the general amount; they received their share of the profits accordingly, and abundance was soon spread through the whole community.

"Never was a society established upon such economical principles, and never were fewer hands employed for the transaction of such a mass of business.

"The greatest harmony long reigned in the association; the directors were disinterested, the correspondents zealous, and the workmen docile and laborious. The company's profits increased every day on a capital which had rapidly become immense; each investment realised a profit of from 60 to 100 per cent., all of which was distributed, in just proportions, to capitalists and *workmen*, according to capital and industry. The shares had increased tenfold."[1]

Mr. Urquhart's estimate of the causes of failure gives, first, "the too great extension of the municipal body, its consequent loss of activity and control, and the evasion of responsibility by

[1] Chap. iv. p. 46, of his work named.

the managers; secondly, the absence of judicial authority to settle in their origin disputes and litigated interests, which, in the absence of law, could only be decided by the violence of faction.

"That the exclusion of the workmen from a due influence in the administration, and share in the profits, was the real cause of the breaking up of the commercial association, is established by the fact of the workmen separating themselves into small societies."

That is a very important statement Mr. Urquhart makes, namely, that "the exclusion of the workmen from a due influence in the administration and share in the profits was the real cause of the breaking up of the association."

The Ambelakiots had, however, many points worthy of modern notice. They were citizens as well as co-operators, and fought when occasion required for independence. They understood the theory of industrial partnerships better than any modern companies do, and profits were divided between capital and labour long before modern discussions arose upon that subject.

More modern instances, however, claim our attention. No one should accuse Socialists of wanting in intrepidity when they settled down on the banks of the Wabash of Indiana, which the much-enduring German celibates were deserting.

New Harmony—a name never applicable to it, but inherited—consisted of 30,000 acres of land, purchased by Mr. Owen in April, 1825. In 1822 it was peopled by 700 persons, who had previously occupied a back settlement in Pennsylvania, near Pittsburg, and were chiefly German emigrants. They had had for their spiritual teacher and temporal director Mr. Rapp. They were ignorant, bigoted, despised intellectual attainments, and were celibates. They greatly enriched themselves, and might have multiplied their wealth, as we have seen, had they multiplied themselves. "New Harmony" stood in a thickly-wooded country on the banks of the Wabash and about thirty miles from the mouth of that river. The site of New Harmony was generally flat for about a mile and a half from the river; but the neighbouring hills were covered with vineyards and orchards. The Wabash here was an ample stream, winding its course in front of the town and

beneath the luxuriant and lofty woods on the opposite banks of the Illinois. The town was well laid out in straight and spacious streets, crossing each other at right angles, after the manner of modern American towns. There were excellent wells in this Wabash settlement, and public ovens at convenient distances from each other. There were well-built granaries, barns, and factories, and a pretty village church, the white steeple of which was pleasantly seen from afar. Mr. Owen explained his intended plan of proceedings in the House of Representatives at Washington, an opportunity which would not be accorded to the angel Gabriel of speaking in the Houses of Parliament in London, if he contemplated founding a settlement on the Thames. In three months Mr. Owen was joined by upwards of 900 individuals, which further increased, and notice had to be given to prevent more persons coming.

Lord Brougham, being asked (about 1826) to give his opinion of schemes of industrial societies, answered : "Co-operation will, by and by, do for the worst, but it must begin with picked men." The Indiana communists were not of this description. In fact, they were advertised for. Notice was given that all ready to join the new system of society might make their way to the banks of the Wabash, and all who came were accepted, just as though you could begin the New World with a job lot. As was to be expected, the men of good sense were ultimately overwhelmed by the mass of wayward adherents, composed, in the words of Mr. Horace Greeley, for the most part of "the conceited, the crotchety, the selfish, the headstrong, the pugnacious, the unappreciated, the played-out, the idle, and the good-for-nothing generally, who, discovering themselves utterly out of place and at a discount in the world as it is, rashly conclude that they are exactly fitted for the world as it ought to be." Nevertheless, the men of good sense ruled at first, and prevailed intermittingly throughout. A committee was appointed to govern this heterogeneous assemblage of 1,000 Republicans. It is clear they had business instincts, for the first thing they did was to pass a resolution "that no spirituous liquors shall be retailed in New Harmony;" and this resolution has been repeated in every great co-operative society down to this day.

For the first forty years of their career no clergyman, with a character to lose, would guarantee them Christian charity. St. Peter was apprised to have a sharp eye upon them if they came to his gate. Yet these Socialists were not wanting in self-denial, which the very elect, who sat in judgment upon them, often failed to practise; and they were resolute that Co-operation should always mean Temperance. They had none of the teetotalers' tenderness for wilful inebriates, treating them with more respect than the self-sustained, self-respecting, temperate man. They regarded intemperance as uneconomical. They knew that drunkenness is madness at large, and in countless families children and women are shut up with these maniacs, and live in daily jeopardy and terror. It was better to have a tiger or a snake in a community than a drunkard. You could kill the beast or the reptile, but the drunkard might kill you. It would not pay to manage him in a community. Some knew the inebriate in every stage. In the first he is amusing. Playwriters make merry with him; comic artists put his foolishness into demoralising cartoons. In the second stage his officious good-nature is succeeded by suspicions, which make his society a nuisance and a peril. In the third stage he stabs those who oppose him, or does it on surmise of his own, against which there is neither warning nor defence. The foulest suspicions grow real to the inebriate. In some cases daughters hear infamous accusations upon testimony apparently authentic. Waste and violence mark the days of horror and sorrow in the household. Little children undergo frights which affect their reason (as doctors know). Working men and women have been hanged for murder which mere self-defence against drunken provocation has forced upon them. The most brilliant men, the sweetest and most self-denying women, whom suffering, weakness, or sorrow bows low, until nervous exhaustion befals, come to this dreadful end. There is no land of refuge, no escape for them. The fatal temptation is ever in their sight. At every corner of every street that which to them is the accursed spirit is blazoned. Advertisements in newspaper or magazine carries the dreadful information where can be got the dainty drink of death. The co-operators had knowledge enough of the causes of sin to pity the poor wretch on the inclined plane, but they would have no inclined

plane laid down in their stores. There have been drunken saints and drunken sceptics, whom both sides have deplored, but a drunken co-operator would be a nuisance, a scandal, and a fool. Where temperance in use is the observance, moderation is expected as naturally as courtesy or truth, and immoderation held as infamous.

In New Harmony the religious difficulty was made to submit to the co-operative conditions of liberty, conscience, and criticism. The different sects ultimately met in church and hall, attending as they chose, when they chose, and upon whom they chose; and preachers of all denominations had free liberty to teach, and discussions are mentioned[1] as having occurred after the morning services.

As late as 1842, New Harmony, in Indiana, was the subject of report in the *New Moral World*. Robert Dale Owen was there at that time, and stated in a speech that many of those present, himself among the number, hoped to live and die in New Harmony. They expected to leave their children, their daughters as well as their sons, behind them, the future inhabitants of the place. Mr. R. D. Owen was occupied in replying to the objections of ministers of religion. The co-operators would have certainly done twice as much as they accomplished but for the time spent in answering clerical critics, who had nothing whatever to do with their business. Mr. R. D. Owen, who had not delivered a single lecture on the subject of religion for ten years, condescended to answer one Rev. B. Halstead, who all that time had been lecturing upon it every Sunday. It cannot be said that these social reformers did nothing for the future. They spent their time in writing papers on theological subjects, long enough to fill the bookshelves of posterity. On their own ground ministers of religion were to be regarded with respect so long as they were unimputative; but religion, being an affair of individual conscience, for which individuals are made responsible in the future, and not the minister, he had no right to dictate opinions for which another had to answer.

The absence of Mr. Robert Owen during the years when personal inspiration and training were most important, was a great disadvantage to the community.

[1] *Co-operative Magazine*, 1826, p. 50.

Abram Combe deserves to be ranked with Mr. Owen for the cost to himself with which he strove to prove co-operative life practicable. He published a periodical informing the public of the progress of the Orbiston community. It was a small neatly-printed paper, which he named *The Register of the First Society of Adherents to Divine Revelation at Orbiston*, which was not very civil to all the other Christian societies, which for eighteen centuries have regarded themselves as being the same description of persons. Mr. Combe professed to derive his principles from Mr. Owen, and appeared to treat the principal things Mr. Owen had said as discoveries. These discoveries Abram Combe had the merit of stating in his own way, and stating very well; and some thought in a much more acceptable form than the master had put them. The *Register* was the least tiresome and most sensibly written of any of the publications of the class. There were practical articles about the situation and prospects of the place, the views of the inmates, the different occupations, diversions, and departments; the proceedings of the theatre which was opened in Orbiston. Letters, when they were good, were introduced, and extracts also from private letters when they contained passages publicly interesting. Notices of co-operative publications were given, and of experiments elsewhere, commonly done in a very pleasant spirit. Lectures were reported, some of which must have been well worth hearing since at this time they are interesting reading.

In 1826 the Orbiston Community buildings were begun on the 18th of March. An average of 100 men were employed. The art ideas of Mr. Abram Combe were of the most sterile utilitarian order. He held that "it ought always to be borne in mind that the *sole use* and end of domestic accommodation is to protect the *body* from painful sensations." "To me," he said, "it has a slight appearance of irrationality to seek *mental* pleasure from such a source, seeing that liberty, security, and knowledge, united with social intercourse, and confirmed by the affection and esteem of *all* with whom we are in contact, constitute the only source from which the wants of the mind can be supplied." The excellent gentleman must have been born without any sense of art in his soul. Every longing for beauty in his nature must have been satisfied by the sight of mortar and whitewash. What a genius poor-law commissioners missed in

Abram Combe! He would have been the Pugin of bare Bethels and union workhouses. He was wise in proposing the plainest conveniences until prosperity was attained, but he need not have struck his harp in praise of naked monotony. A building was described as possessing a centre—left centre and left wing —right centre and right wing. The left centre contained about 120 private rooms. The whole building was plain, was all of hewn stone, and was said to have "a rather magnificent appearance," which criticism, after what we know of the architect, must have been written by a gravedigger. It is, however, but just to add that the *Glasgow Chronicle* of that day said that "the rooms intended for the inmates were neat and even elegant." If so there must have been some departure from Mr. Combe's principle of dreariness.

Orbiston was near Hamilton. The funds for the settlement were raised by a joint-stock company, and were divided into two hundred shares of £250 each, paid in quarterly instalments of £10; Mr. Combe, of course, being the giant contributor.

The community buildings are described as situated on the banks of the Calder, at that place the river being but a paltry, quick, shallow, mill stream, but the banks beautiful. The visitor approaching the place saw only a tall white building, covered with blue slates, standing entirely by itself, without a house or tree to keep it company. The general feature of the spot was flat, but surrounded on all sides by near or distant, high mountainous scenery. On arriving at the building one found it to be plain, of great extent, and devoid of every ornament—yet the aim, the zeal, the sacrifices of the promotors, and the hopes they inspired, made these places sacred.

Mr. Combe was described as a stout-built, middle-aged, farmer-looking man, giving no indication of the general knowledge he was understood to possess; known in Edinburgh as a sharp-eyed tanner—that being his business—well understanding the art of pursuing the "main chance," of a cynical turn of mind, satirical and vivacious beyond either of his eminent brothers. He visited New Lanark in 1820. Though he was then thirty-five years of age, he experienced an entire "change of mind," as complete, remarkable, and salutary as any recorded in the annals of religious conversion.

Some of the many persons visiting Orbiston were naturally

disposed to make some compensation to the community for the time of the members consumed in taking visitors round, and they made offer of money on account of the attendants placed at their disposal. This was resented in a dignified and foolish article, for the community might have been eaten up, either in food or time, by visitors—a few curious to learn, but more curious to ridicule. A charge for attendance in showing people round, at so much per hour, would have been welcome to the common fund. However, a very sensible suggestion was made, namely, that visitors who felt desirous of serving the place should purchase some article of its produce.

In the *Co-operative Magazine* of this period (1826) were prudently published several calculations of the proportion of the agriculturists, mechanics, and other workmen who should be included in a community, according to the quality of land which was to be occupied. There were also statements of the conditions to which members were to conform in the Orbiston and New Harmony communities. These calculations and conditions are not devoid of historic interest as showing what conceptions were entertained of the art of association, by two such eminent leaders and students of it as Robert Owen and Abram Combe. But it would be unfair in the historian to waylay the reader with twenty pages of these technical details.

The Orbiston estate consisted of 290 acres, for which the serious sum of £20,000 was paid. The land was cold and poor, and has been judged to be not worth half the money ; and an additional £20,000 was expended on buildings. An ill-assorted random collection of most unsuitable persons flocked to the spot, which speedily acquired from the surrounding population the emphatic name of "Babylon." At its breaking up the land and buildings were sold for £16,000. But for Mr. George Combe, who, at the death of his brother Abram, forced on the total destruction of the concern, the foundry, with its "forge and water-wheel" might yet have remained to waken the echoes of that "romantic dell." Orbiston was ridding itself of its idlers and its unsuitable members—it was gradually consolidating itself, and would, but for the forcible legal interference of the great phrenologist, have righted itself.[1]

Orbiston was nearer succeeding than other European experi-

[1] *New Moral World*, vol. vii. p. 995, January 4, 1840.

ments. Had Mr. Abram Combe lived, his practical sense and fine example, no doubt, would have sustained the community. He was quite right in wasting no money on ornament in the erection of the earlier buildings, but he was wrong in writing against ornament; true ornament is art, and art is pleasure; and pleasure in art is refinement, and refinement is the grace of life. It was of no consequence that the buildings were plain at first. The enthusiastic would be quite content if the buildings were wholesome, and they might have been so contrived that the addition of comeliness could have been given when there was money to pay for it. Mr. Combe died of his own enthusiasm. Unfitted for much field-work, he persisted in it excessively, even after his lungs were affected. When what he had done was explained to him, he regretted that the physiology of health had not been taught to him in lieu of other knowledge, which could not now save him. He was a man of fine parts and many personal accomplishments, and a martyr of Co-operation.

Subsequently Mr. William Thompson arose, with whose name the reader is already familiar. He had a definite scheme of social life in his mind, which he had given the best years of his life to describe and define, and which he left his fortune to forward.

In those days it was, and still is, difficult to leave money for purposes of progress, not of an orthodox character. Religious judges at once confiscated the bequest on the ground of alleged immorality of purpose. Any persons to whom the money might revert could successfully plead the lunacy of the testator. Nobody believed in the sanity of any one who sought unknown improvement in an untrodden way. The only way was to give the means while you lived. If testators could have been persuaded of this, some projected communities never attempted would have been heard of, and some commenced would not have been lost.

Mr. Thompson died in March, 1833, and left freehold estates to the value of £8,000 or £10,000 to thirteen trustees, to be applied in loans to communities, the purchase of shares in communities, and the reprinting for gratuitous distribution such of Mr. Thompson's works as might be supposed to further co-operative objects. The heirs-

at-law disputed the will, and collections had to be made to defend it. A plea of insanity was set up against Mr. Thompson. Ultimately a decision was obtained in the Rolls Court, Dublin, when the counsel for the heirs brought forward the same imaginary charges of intended sexual immorality in community arrangements which were brought forward thirty years later in the Rolls Court, London, with respect to the Queenwood community. The Cork case ended in the court taking possession of the funds.

In September, 1831, announcement was made of a co-operative community being established in Cork, under the influence of Mr. Thompson—it was intended to consist of two thousand individuals. Two years before his death a Congress was held in Manchester, May, 1831, for the purpose of arranging the immediate formation of a community. The first Birmingham Co-operative Society had published, in "Carpenter's Political Letter," a recommendation that the incipient co-operative community should be upon the plan laid down by Mr. William Thompson, and that application should be made to 199 other co-operative societies to elect one member of community each, and supply him with £30, in order that the community should start with £6,000. Mr. Owen declined to be a party to the pettiness of writing to two hundred societies only. He proposed a committee for universal correspondence, and refused to have his name associated with any committee which was for making a beginning with a smaller sum than £240,000. Mr. Thompson had come up to London, with other gentlemen resident at a distance, to promote practical operations.[1] At the Manchester Congress, he wisely urged that they should commence with a small experiment in proportion to their possible means, and the Congress was disposed to advance £6,000 to him, when it could be raised upon their scheme. A document was agreed to in which his plan was recommended, but Mr. Owen, saying that £6,000 or £20,000 would be insufficient, discouraged the attempt.

In the Cork community, which Mr. Thompson meditated, entire freedom of thought and expression on all subjects were to prevail, guided by regard for the feelings of others; and

[1] Mr. Thompson's speech, London Congress, 1832.

entire freedom of action, not interfering with similar freedom in others, were amongst the mutually guaranteed rights of every member of this community. Religion was declared to be the peculiar concern of the individual alone. Women were to be entitled to equal means of improvement and enjoyment, and to be equally eligible with men to all offices to which their inclination or talents might lead.

Besides his famous Scotch convert, Abram Combe, Mr. Owen made an Irish convert hardly less remarkable, who founded an Irish community which attained greater success than that of Orbiston. It was in 1830 that Mr. Vandeleur, of Ralahine, devoted 618 acres to the uses of a modified community on Mr. Owen's plan. His tenantry were of the lowest order of Irish poor, discontented, disorderly, and vicious. Mr. Vandeleur had heard Mr. Owen's lectures in Dublin, and was persuaded of the suitability of his scheme of co-operative agriculture for Ireland, and he did not hesitate to trust his fortune in order to verify the sincerity of his convictions. His expectation of success was very high, and, although he proposed to apply the co-operative principle to the most unfavourable state of society in the world, it is admitted on all hands that his experiment succeeded.

Strange to say, the most important application of Co-operation to agriculture has occurred in the restless land of potatoes and Whiteboys, amid the bogs of Ralahine. Mr. William Pare published a history of this Irish experiment. The sort of treatment to which farm labourers had been subjected on the Vandeleur estate there was not calculated to promote good-will. A reaper on a hot harvest day paused to get a drink of water from a can, when the steward kicked it over, declaring that he would not have water there as an excuse for the reapers wasting their time. No wonder that a few wandering shots flew about this estate : and after better treatment set in, the men went out shooting as a precautionary measure, but when they saw good homesteads put up for them, a share of the produce of their labour secured to them, peace, and even prosperity, reigned in that wretched district. This patch of Irish communism is the only one that ever flourished. It did not come to grief of itself; its proprietor ended it. Though a gentleman of good family, Mr John Scott Vandeleur

was a gambler, and lost the co-operative farms and everything else in a dice-box. He fled himself, and passed into outer darkness, and was never more heard of by men. There being no equitable land laws, such as Mr. Gladstone devised, for Ireland, the co-operators had no claims for improvement of stock, and the "New Systemites," as they were called in Ireland, vanished also. There is no doubt that the "system" answered among the worst-used people, and under the worst circumstances imaginable. The Rev. Francis Trench, brother of the Archbishop of Dublin, visited the "New Systemites," and not only expressed, but wrote his approval of what he saw. The society had made itself rules. One was, that "no member be expected to perform any service or work but such as is agreeable to his or her feelings." Irish human nature must not be of bad material, since both honest and disagreeable work was daily done, and done cheerfully. One day a mail coach traveller found a man up to his middle in water repairing a dam.

"Are you working by yourself?" inquired the traveller.

"Yes," was the answer.

"Where is your steward?"

"We have no steward."

"Who is your master?"

"We have no master. We are on a new system."

"Then who sent you to do this work?"

"The committee," replied the man in the dam.

"Who is the committee?" asked the mail coach visitor.

"Some of the members."

"What members do you mean?"

"The ploughman and labourers who are appointed by us as a committee. I belong to the New Systemites."

When Mr. Craig, the co-operative steward, first went among these men, who had shot the previous steward, they sent him an interesting sketch of a skull and crossbones, and an intimation that they intended to put him to bed under the "daisy quilt." As he went along the road, the people who did not know him saluted him with the kind country greeting of "God be with you." One of his labourers told him that he should always reply in Irish—"Tharah-ma-dhoel." Accordingly Mr. Craig answered everybody "Tharah-ma-

dhoel"; but he observed that his rejoiner did not make him popular, when a friend explained to him that "Tharah-ma-dhoel" meant "Go to the Devil." The man who taught this dangerous answer became one of the best members of the society; and once, when the co-operative steward was supposed to be lost behind the Crattan Wood, he met "Tharah-ma-dhoel" looking for him, and on being asked why he had come out on that errand, answered—

"We thought you were lost in the Bog Mountain."

"Suppose I was lost, what then?" said the steward.

"Sure, sir," answered Tharah-ma-dhoel, "if we lost you we should lose the system."

Mr. Craig deserves words of honour for his courage in undertaking the post of steward, seeing that his predecessor had been shot, and that the proprietor, Mr. Vandeleur, had been under the protection of an armed force. Between Terry-Alts, White Feet, Black Feet factions, and a "Tharah-ma-dhoel" set of labourers, Mr. Craig had a very unpleasant prospect before him.

The government of the colony was absolute in Mr. Vandeleur, who retained the right of summary dismissal of any person brought upon the estate of whom he disapproved. Yet during the three years and a half the Clare community (it was situated in the county of Clare) lasted, he never had occasion to use this summary power. It would not have been very wonderful if he had, seeing that the members of the community were elected by ballot among the peasants of Ralahine. The business of the farm was regulated by a committee, also elected by ballot. The committee assembled every evening, and appointed to each man his work for the following day. There was no inequality established among them. The domestic offices, usually performed by servants, were assigned to the members under seventeen years of age.

It seems quite incredible that the simple and reasonable form of government should supersede the government of the bludgeon and the blunderbuss—the customary mode by which Irish labourers of that day regulated their industrial affairs. Yet peace and prosperity prevailed through an arrangement of equity. From this quiet community, established in the midst of terror and murder, Mr. Vandeleur received back in full all

the money he advanced for the wages of the labourers; £200 a-year interest on the working capital, the stock, and farm implements; and £700 a year rent.

What induced the labourers to work with such profitable zeal and good will was, that the members of all ages above seventeen received an equal share in the division of profits over the above payments. Besides, a co-operative store was established similar to the one at New Lanark, whence they obtained provisions of good quality and nearly cost price. Pure food, honest weight, and reduced prices filled them with astonishment. None had known such a state of things before. None had conceived the possibility of it. The members ate at one table, which saved much expense in cooking food and serving meals. People who had always lived in doubt whether they should have a meal at all, made no scruple of eating with one another when a well-spread table was before them. In addition, care was bestowed on the education of their children. The school was conducted upon purely secular principles, and the results were highly valued by the parents. As was the habit of communities, spirituous liquors were not permitted on the estate, and neither was smoking, which was gratuitous and petulant prohibition.

Had the Ralahine farm continued, arrangements would have been made for enabling the members to acquire the property and hold the community as their own, by common capital.

It was in the "enthusiastic period" when this Clare community flourished, and needed enthusiasm to carry social ideas to these desperate districts. Communism should no longer be counted sentimental, since it did the stout-hearted practical work it achieved in Ireland. It is a thousand pities, all counted, that Vandeleur was a gambler, as otherwise the merriest community in the world would have been established in the pleasant land of Erin. Men who taught their new steward to reply to the pious greetings of the peasantry by telling them to go to the devil, had an infinity of fun in them. In racier humour than this, and in harmless drollery and wit, the Irish surpass all tribes of men; and communism in their hands would have been industry, song, and laughter.

Yielding to a necessity always adverse, experiments were

next attempted in the fens of Cambridgeshire. The projector, Mr. Hodgson, was a handsome and lusty farmer, who heard from clerical adversaries that a community might serve harem as well as public purposes; and as he had some land, a little money, and plausibility of address, he turned out as a peripatetic orator in favour of beginning the new world in his native fens of Cambridgeshire. No one suspected his object, he was regarded as an eager advocate for realising the new system of society. Mr. Owen at once set his face against the ingenious schemer, whose hasty and indefinite proceedings he disapproved. Mr. Owen's high-minded instincts always led him to associate only with men of honour and good promise. He went down to Manea Fen, the name of the site chosen, and, having acquaintance with landowners of the neighbourhood, was soon able to properly estimate the qualifications of the new communist leader. Some gentlemen farmers, who knew Hodgson's antecedents and unfitness for trust, did Mr. Owen the service of telling him the truth. Mr. Fleming, the editor of the *New Moral World* wisely declined, on business grounds, to sanction the Manea Fen project. It did not add to the repute of the scheme that Mr. Rowbotham, afterwards known as "Parallox," made himself the advocate of the discountenanced projector. Many honest, and some able, men, naturally thinking that the discontent with Mr. Hodgson's plans originated in narrowness, and impatient to try their fortunes on the land themselves, went down and endeavoured to put the place in working order. Buildings were erected and many residents were for a time established there; but the chief of the affair soon found that he had misconceived the character of those whom he had attracted, and they soon abandoned it. Those who had the smallest means suffered most, because they remained the longest, being unable to transfer themselves. The *Working Bee*, the organ of the association, edited by Mr. James Thompson, had animation, literary merit, and the advantage of appealing to all who were impatient of delay, and not well instructed in the dangers of prematurity.

It was in August, 1838, that Mr. E. T. Craig made the first announcement that Mr. Hodgson, who had the suspicious address of Brimstone Hill, Upwell, had an estate of two

hundred acres within a few miles of Wisbech, which he intended to devote to a community. Mr. Hodgson addressed the readers of the *Moral World* as "Fellow Beings," the only time in which that abstract designation was applied to them. The editor prudently prefaced his remarks upon the communications by quoting the saying of the Town Clerk of Ephesus, "Let us do nothing rashly." Mr. William Hodgson had been a sailor in his younger days—and many things else subsequently. He was acting in the character of the farmer when he invented the Manea Fen community. It was mortgaged, but this did not prevent him offering to sell it to the Socialist party. This Fen Farm consisted of four fifty-acre lots, divided by dykes, as is the Fen country plan. The dykes acted as drains also. Three fifties lay together, the fourth was somewhat distant—half a mile. Twenty-four cottages, twelve in a row built back to back, were single-room shanties. There was a dining shanty, which would accommodate one hundred people.

There were brave, energetic men attracted to this place. To set up a paper, which was one of the features of the Fen Farm, was to enter the ranks of aspiring cities. The members were "working bees" in the best sense, and were capable of success anywhere if moderate industry and patience could command it.

Besides being disastrous to individuals, this Fen community was a hindrance to the greater scheme of the Queenwood community, which had then been projected, and which represented what of unity, wisdom, and capacity the Socialist party had.

The possibility of co-operation aiding in new forms of social life was next destined to be illustrated in an unexpected manner, and by a very unlikely person—namely, Mr. Feargus O'Connor. He soon became master of English Chartism; and he and countrymen of his carried it clear away from all the moorings to which the English leaders would have held it secure. They vehemently protested against social reform as digressive and impossible. Against all attempts to obtain property for the purposes of community they urged, you cannot get land—laws of primogeniture and entail forbid. If law did let you get land, government would not let you

keep it; and if law and government consented, how can those get land who cannot get bread?

Mr. O'Connor was a man of candour, had a mind susceptible of new ideas, and ultimately came himself to project a "Co-operative Land Scheme." He gave to it at one time the name of "Co-operative." It was subsequently known as the National Land Scheme. It was through contact with the social advocates that the Chartist leaders turned their attention to life upon the land. He bought four estates and contracted for two others—O'Connorville, near Rickmansworth, formerly bore the name of Herinsgate, Herts; Snigsend, near Staunton, Gloucester; Lowbands, near Tewkesbury, on the borders of Gloucester and Worcester; Minster Lovell, near Whitney, Oxfordshire; Bromsgrove, Worcestershire; and Mathon, near Great Malvern. The purchase of the two last was not completed. O'Connorville cost £9,736; Lowbands, £18,903; Minster Lovell, £22,978; Snigsend, £27,237; Dodford, £12,046; and there was a deposit on Mathon of £2,005. Mathon, however, did not come into the occupation of the company.

There was confusion in making the allotments, which were given by ballot. They fell, of course, often to the unprepared and unfit. The properties, owing to an ill-devised mode of purchase, came into Chancery. Nevertheless, there remained several persons upon these estates who lived profitably upon their holdings. Had the occupants had sufficient capital to enable them to subsist while they built their habitations and gathered in their first crops—had the holdings been of four acres instead of two acres only, the scheme might have been of lasting benefit to many persons. The *Newcastle Daily Chronicle* sent (1875) a special commissioner, Mr. Longstaffe, to visit all these places. He recounts how the shares were fixed as low as twenty-six shillings each. The member who had paid up four shares (five pounds four shillings) was entitled to ballot for two acres. It was assumed that good arable land might be rented in the most fertile parts of the country at fifteen shillings an acre, or bought outright at twenty-five years' purchase at eighteen pounds fifteen shillings an acre. As soon as the share capital realised £5,000, a hundred and twenty acres were to be bought to locate sixty persons on two-

acre holdings, and leave a balance of £2,750; this would allow to each occupant a sum of forty-five pounds sixteen and eightpence with which to start on his enterprise. It was believed that thirty pounds would be sufficient to build a commodious and comfortable cottage, and that the fifteen pounds remaining would provide implements, stock, seeds, and subsistence until the land became sustaining to its occupiers. It was thought that the allotments with dwellings might be leased for ever to the members at an annual rental of five pounds. The Chartist land cry was: "A beautiful cottage and four acres, with thirty pounds to work it, for a prepayment of five pounds four shillings."

When the society had the amazing number of 70,000 members, the total sum they subscribed was a little over £36,000. It took £78,000 to locate fewer than two hundred and fifty persons. Seventy thousand members spread all over Great Britain involved unforeseen cost to register — it was found to require £6,000 to put their names upon the books. The cost of land, the expense of conducting the great society on Mr. O'Connor's plan, actually required an enormous sum of money and time to carry out. When the subject was examined before a Parliamentary committee, Mr. Finlason, the actuary of the National Debt, calculated that it would require twenty-one millions to place the whole seventy thousand members on the land, and that, supposing Mr. O'Connor's most sanguine scheme of profit could be realised, it would require every minute of three centuries to get all the shareholders on their holdings.

Thus the politicians failed, as no social reformers ever did, however, some advantages accrued from their efforts. The attention of the great mass of working-class politicians, who were mere politicians and nothing more, was turned to the fact that progress had a social as well as political side, and Mr. Ernest Jones, instead of opposing Co-operation in public debates, became an advocate of it.

The last of the English attempts at community to be recounted here was the one at Queenwood, in Hampshire. This was the greatest effort of the kind made in this country.

For more than twenty years before it began the disciples of Socialism had been forecasting the means of a decisive

experiment in England. Rich men had believed in community as a reasonable commercial speculation. Benevolent men with a turn for statesmanship had believed in these home colony schemes as a means of easier and better government of the people. After the rise of the socialistic agitation the working people believed in community as a means of self-help and self-government. Their idea was that moderate labour on the part of the many, and moderate attainments in the science of society on the part of the few, would bring success.

The Socialists understood by communism simply a society in which the fruits of intellect, art, and industry should be diffused by consent, poverty made impossible, and ordinary crime unnecessary. The laws of the universe were not exclusive. Light and air were common. Life and death were common. In the hour of his birth the young prince has to scream for air like any infantine pauper; and unceremonious Death walks into the parlour of the gentleman without sending in his card. It had been proposed in Parliament that galleries of art should be open to the gaze of the shoeblack as well as to the connoisseur. Books of rare value were being made accessible to all. Fire offices insured the cottage or the mansion. The careless were made as secure as the careful. Life insurance was a form of equality. The strong and the temperate were made to use their prolonged lives to pay up premiums which go to the progeny of the weak and the reckless. The virtuous and the vicious, the base and the noble, had been all declared equal in the sight of the law. The same police watch over the life of the scoundrel and the patriot. Before civilisation began, the weak had to take care of themselves. Now the feeble and the strong, the coward and the brave, are equally protected. That personal daring which made the inspiration of Homeric song, which made Sparta a name of energy through all time, which makes the blood tingle over the pages of Sir Walter Scott, is no longer a daily requisite. A man need neither carry arms nor use them. A set of men are paid to defend him. An old warrior of the romantic days would rather die than call the police. If a man gets into a disputation he is not allowed to settle it in honest hot rage, but must refer his quarrel to the decision

of a cold-blooded magistrate, who will probably fine him for his fervour. How the brave were abashed—how courage blushed with shame—how the pride of manliness was stung, when craven, cringing law first put valour down. There is plenty of exercise for courage without expending it in broils and bloodshed. The equality of the law conduces to justice—and the equality of competence may lead to security and morality.

A Hall of Science was erected in Rockingham Street, Sheffield, in 1839: a commodious and handsome building for the time. Mr. Joseph Smith had erected the first at Salford, less pretentious, but a pleasant structure, costing £850, and capable of holding six hundred persons. The Liverpool Hall, a building of mark for those days, cost £5,000. The London Hall, in John Street, Tottenham Court Road, cost £3,000. Lawrence Street Chapel, Birmingham, built or held by the Southcotians, was bought for £800. More than £22,000 was spent in one year in securing "Social Institutions," and Mr. Pare, with that business wisdom in which he excelled, had a deed drawn on the model of that by which Methodist chapels are vested in the Conference. Had the community plan at Queenwood succeeded, a powerful social organisation had existed in England. A good-looking chapel was held in Glasgow, in Great Hamilton Street. The present writer, the last of the Social Missionaries, officiated in 1845. In other places halls were continuously occupied. The most famous and costly erection was that of the Hall of Science in Campfield, Manchester, which has since been purchased for the City Free Library—the most honourable use to which any of these halls have come. Dr. John Watts was chiefly or mainly instrumental in promoting this welcome destination of it. In the early Queenwood days upwards of one hundred thousand members of Socialist Societies could be counted upon for Co-operation. The Community Society contributions were fixed at threepence a week from each member. As Mr. Owen calculated that £250,000 was the lowest sum which would enable a successful experiment to be conducted, the prospect of collecting it by threepence a week was a distant one. The hope of increasing the fund more rapidly led to a recurrence to the old co-operative store plan, and a store for

the sale of tea and groceries was opened at the Institution in John Street, London. Thus the necessity of self-created capital brought back the store, for years extinct in London. In 1837, when the National Community Friendly Society was formed, the subscription was fixed at one shilling a week, and those only who had subscribed £50 were declared eligible to go upon the land. In 1838, the members amounted to four hundred. In 1839, £1,200 were collected in this way, which in two hundred years or more would furnish the £240,000 Mr. Owen required. Nothing discouraged by this circumstance, a year before, Messrs. Wm. Clegg, John Finch, Joseph Smith, by one of the formidable ukases from the Central Board, were instructed to inquire for an estate, capable of sustaining a colony of at least five hundred individuals. There was some idea of going Fenwards again in search of a site for the new world. They actually made an offer for an estate in Norfolk, for which they were to pay £11,500.

The Community Committee contracted to buy the Wretton estates, near Wisbech, of Mr. James Hill, but, as that gentleman had social and training views of his own, he stipulated that he should have a paramount right to carry those out. As this would confuse the public judgment of what was done by two different sets of regenerators acting in the same field, the purchase was not proceeded with. After much inquiry, other negotiations, and more misgiving, land was rented in Hants.

The estate consisted of two farms, one of 301 acres, named Queenwood, tithe free; the other 232 acres, extra-parochial, named Buckholt. The annual rent was £350, having been fined down from £375 by payment of £750. The society had the power to further fine down the rent to £300, £250, and £200 on making three payments of £1,500 each at three successive periods. Complaints were made that the land selected at Tytherly was unsuited in several respects. It was unfruitful, it was inaccessible for those needing to frequent it; it was too far from markets.

Even in London, where the vast number of people living together necessitates a certain tolerance from the impossibility of noticing the peculiarities of one another, it has been difficult to obtain a site for a hall of science. In the town

of Bury, in Lancashire, chiefly possessed by the house of Derby, who were not favourably disposed to Unitarians, it was impossible for a long period of years to obtain a strip of ground on which to erect a Unitarian church; and those enterprising religionists were under the necessity of waiting until they could convert a gentleman who happened to possess a little land, when they obtained a site. When the colony projectors have succeeded in securing some spot, it has generally been one with many disadvantages, and conceded to them because nothing better could be done with the place. The calculation of the owners has sometimes been that the social occupants would, after spending all their capital in improving the land, be obliged to relinquish it, when it would return, gratuitously improved, into their hands.

The most important accession which was made at this time was that of Mr. William Galpin, a banker, of Salisbury, who wrote to the *New Moral World* a modest, comprehensive, business-like letter, saying, "he regretted that Mr. Owen did not intend being himself a resident in the community formed in his name"; arguing properly that "he who knew most should be at hand to give effect to what he knew, and that he thought a joint-stock fund was possible to be formed for the especial purpose of advancing the practical objects of the home colony contemplated." The editor, who did not at all comprehend the quality of his correspondent, answered with more confidence than judgment, that it was not probable that much could be done in way of a joint-stock fund, till the members of the proposed community had proved the success of their undertaking; which meant that when they had succeeded without money they would be able to get it. The unseeing and sanguine editor argued "they would get more than they knew how to use."

In 1841 the buildings were commenced at Tytherly, from the designs of Mr. Hansom, a clever architect, who had a sympathy with social views. He had erected a Philosophical Museum in Leicester, not distinguished for gracefulness of design, but it was never completed as he intended it. His best known erection, the Birmingham Town Hall, was for many years considered the handsomest town hall in the kingdom. He was a man of mechanical resource. He was

the inventor of the hansom cab, and some machines which were successful. It was probably through Mr. Pare's municipal connection with Birmingham that he became architect of the Queenwood Hall at Tytherly. A sketch of it appeared in the *New Moral World* for October 9, 1841, about the time of its completion.

The building was a pleasant semi-baronial structure, and had a certain stateliness. The manner of the erection was more creditable than many churches. It was built with the care that befitted a sacred edifice. The parts out of sight were finished as scrupulously as those that met the eye. Owing to Mr. Galpin's wise and wholesome sense of thoroughness, the laths which formed the partitions were of the best quality, and the nails used in the obscurest part of the building were the best that could be had. There was nothing hidden that was mean. It is one of the pleasant recollections of the place, that its directors endeavoured to make it honest throughout. Seven or eight hundred pounds were spent in making roads and promenades around it—spacious and enduring. The old Romans would have respected them. Even the kitchen and basement rooms, used by the members for evening meetings, were wainscoted with mahogany, many feet high. Comfort and grace were consulted as far as means permitted in everything.

To the credit of the English communists they were no Barebones party. Had they succeeded in making a community, it had been a pleasant one. They were not afraid of art, and beauty had no terrors for them. Mr. Bate, who was an artist, and who ultimately gave his fortune for the advancement of the Queenwood experiment, sent eight original drawings in water colours, framed and glazed, as a beginning towards forming a gallery of drawings. Mr. Devonshire Saull meditated bestowing his geological museum upon Tytherly. Geology did not make much progress in his time, as the clergy imagined there was something wrong with Nature. Indeed, many suspected Sir Charles Lyell of thinking himself wiser than Moses. To Mr. Saull belonged the merit of enthusiasm for the suspected science, and according to his knowledge he promoted it.

It being stated that £3,500 was required on loan for five

years, bearing interest at 5 per cent., intimations were at once received that the following sums would be sent from the following places: Oldham, £38; Birmingham, £80; Sheffield, £60; Worcester, £61; Coventry, £121; Leicester, £60; Nottingham, £60; Northampton, £17; a London Friend, £100; Glasgow, £20; Brighton, £5; Chatham, £50; Suffolk, £100; Edinburgh, £230; Hyde, £184; Norwich, £50; Ashton, £56; Macclesfield, £24; Liverpool, £61; Boston, £20; Hull, £7; Louth, £20. This celerity of subscription is good evidence of the widespread enthusiasm with which the Queenwood project was regarded.

In 1842 Mr. Owen resigned the governorship of Queenwood, and Mr. Finch became president of the society, when a new executive was formed for carrying out the affairs of Queenwood. At the Congress of 1843 Mr. Owen was reappointed president. Subsequently Mr. William Pare became governor; and his suavity, accessibility, and zeal rendered him the most popular that held the office.

Among the new and honourable expedients for diverting the mind of the public from the polemical character of the communistic movement, was that of creating a Home Colonisation Society, which proposed to take the affairs of Queenwood into its hands. It was thought that men of money might be induced to join the society divested of controversial names which proved a hindrance to the general investment of capital. The projectors of the new Home Colonisation Society contributed largely to its funds, and for some time the *New Moral World* contained frequent announcements of the receipt of a thousand pounds at a time from this society. But its name had no enthusiasm in it, and its example produced very little outside effect. The constitution of this society was devised by Mr. W. H. Ashurst, an eminent solicitor in the City of London. Struck with compassion for poor people in every part of the empire who, by reason of the high rate of postage subsisting, were prevented from receiving or giving information affecting their interests or affections when separated from members of their families, Mr. Ashurst rendered invaluable and prolonged assistance to Sir Rowland Hill in the great advocacy which gave the people the Penny Postage. No writer made a more striking impression than he by a union of

sympathy and facts. Many insurgent reformers sought his protecting counsel; he warned them against the pitfalls of the law, and when in the course of what they thought their duty they fell into them, he stretched forth a strong and generous hand to pull them out; and his son and Mr. John Morris, who succeeded him, continued like disinterested service.

In 1843 came the resignation of Mr. W. Galpin, of his office of general secretary. A certain grandeur of aim, which he had in common with Mr. Owen, had led him to sanction a scale of administration which promised soon to exhaust the available funds of the party to which he had himself contributed with notable liberality. His influence in rendering the society neutral in matters of theology, destroyed the zeal of many, whose activity was necessary to sustain the movement among the branches, and his connection with the society was of too short a period for the education of new supporters, who should be content to advance economical projects by considerations purely economical. Enforced neutrality, dictated by policy, is different from the intelligent neutrality of discernment. Mr. Galpin took leave of the society, in a letter of good taste and dignity. It was "enough for him," he said, "that there existed a feeling that the cause might be better served by his ceasing to be one of its officers."

Mr. Owen had had the Tytherly Hall made to bear conspicuously outside of it the mystic letters C. M., which meant Commencement of the Millennium which, however, declined to begin its career there.

Towards the end of 1845 the *Standard* announced that "Mr. Owen had taken his leave of Rose Hall, Hampshire, for America. The Queenwood enterprise, after £37,000 was spent upon it, proved a failure."

"Rose Hall" was the name of a house on Rose Hill, a pretty little residence on the estate generally used for boarders, or as the occasional residence of the governor. Many ladies and gentlemen went down to Queenwood, and became residents, and contributed pleasantly both to the funds and the society of the establishment.

When affairs at Harmony (for Mr. Owen had given Queenwood this unfortunate name, which served to exaggerate every

minor difference into discord) began to present financial complications, the boarders gradually fell off. Members' meetings ceased to be interesting, and credit was the agreeable but insidious canker-worm which ate up Queenwood. Works were undertaken, provisions ordered, accounts with tradesmen augmented. Had the community begun on the principle of co-operative stores—of neither giving nor taking credit—its operations would have been humbler, but might have been lasting. It came to pass in the process of Queenwood affairs, that the branches in which poorer members predominated were able to send delegates, who were able to elect a new governor, who was unable from his own means to influence capitalists who were wanted. Mr. John Buxton, the new governor, was a man of honesty and courage, and, in more solvent days, would have been successful.

The three trustees of this society (Messrs. Finch, Green, and Clegg), being mainly or altogether liable, naturally became solicitous to protect themselves. Had they proposed to take the affairs of Queenwood into their own hands, undertaken to conduct it first for their own security, subjecting their administration to annual audit, and paying any profits they could realise in proportion to all claimants, Queenwood would have ceased to be a public community, but it would have ceased without discredit. Ultimately they hired labourers and such stray ruffians as were to be had, and put Mr. Buxton and his family forcibly into the lanes, where they all remained, for days and nights, in courageous protest on behalf of the humble community shareholders, who had subscribed their money in as much good faith as the largest lender, and were entitled to have some honourable treaty made with their chief representative. Thus ended the affair of the Queenwood community in 1846.

The trustees were assisted in their summary proceedings by Mr. Lloyd Jones. Their only justification for their violence was that they rescued the property with a view to do what justice was possible to every class of subscribers. Instead, these trustees used it for private purposes. They brought up the claims of the tradesmen; they met the demands of the Goldsmids from whom the estate was leased; they relinquished portions of the estate, and let the Queenwood Hall and

grounds for a school to Mr. Edmonson, a celebrated educator of Lancashire. It was afterwards known as Queenwood College; it combined industrial with commercial and scientific training. As a college it more resembled the famous school or Fellenberg, of Hofwyld; or that of Mr. Heldenmayor, of Worksop, in Nottinghamshire, unrivalled among English schools for the industrial, social, and classical education imparted—of which Charles Reece Pemberton gave a memorable account in the *Monthly Repository* when edited by W. J. Fox. The Socialists were proud that Queenwood had become a college so much in accordance with their own conception of education. The best known teacher connected with it was Dr. Yeats, of Peckham; himself a writer or authority on education. Professor Tyndall and others or note in science and learning were teachers in it.

Many years elapsed, and it was found that the trustees, Messrs. Finch, Green, and Clegg, who had seized the estate, rendered no account of what proceeds they derived from it, not even to the principal loanholders, and it came to pass that Mr. Pare and others entered an action in Chancery to compel them to render an account. The trustees held that no society existed. But so long as a single branch of the community society continued to pay subscriptions, the society had a legal continuation. The Congress mentioned, of which Mr. Buxton, the governor, was the legitimate officer, continued the society. The present writer was appointed and continued to be the general secretary, and for one had always continued a subscribing member; and he, on behalf of the humble community subscribers, became a party to the action in Chancery. The case was tried before Lord Romilly. Corrupted, it would seem by immunity, the trustees resisted the honest demand to produce their accounts, and, incredible to relate, they set up the plea of the old enemies of social reform, that the society was constituted for the propagation of immoral principles, and was therefore illegal, and could not enforce accountability of its trustees. This plea from men who had been vehement and passionate defenders of this society, when other persons had brought this vile charge against it, was a new scandal. One of the trustees was certainly not of this opinion, for in 1841 Mr. C. F. Green wrote a letter from Spithead, announcing to his dear brothers

and sisters of the *New Moral World* that he had given up competition, and exclaimed—

> "Farewell, dear brothers, I have marked you well,
> Nor yet for ever do I leave you now;
> And busy thoughts of thee my bosom swell,
> And thronging recollections crowd my brow."

Mr. Green had no intention then of filing a statement in the Court of Chancery that he and his dear brothers and sisters were members of an immoral association. When affidavits of the false trustees (too long to quote here) were read by their counsel to Lord Romilly, he said: "Ah! it is all very well, my learned brother, but where is the money?" and when the learned counsel again implored the court to listen to hackneyed extracts from Mr. Owen's ill-reported lectures on marriage, Lord Romilly said: "The court is quite aware of that, my learned brother, what we want is a statement of receipts and expenditure since the trustees took possession of this property." The reluctant accounts had to be produced, and the balance withheld had to be paid into court. Lord Romilly was a just judge, regardless of the speculative opinions of those who sought justice at his hands. He had known Mr. Owen from his youth, and was quite aware that his opinions were not open to the imputations sought to be put upon them by the apostate trustees. The Queenwood Hall was sold by order of the court, and the proceeds equitably distributed among the loanholders and preference shareholders. There was none to be divided among original contributors to the community funds. Hundreds of men and women, who invested all their savings in this generous and hopeless enterprise, received nothing. And thus Queenwood passed away as a communistic scheme.

When the trustees seized upon the effects of the society, they made an attempt themselves to sell it, and they actually advertised Harmony Hall for sale in the *Times*, suggesting to purchasers that it might be made available for a lunatic asylum. In the opinion of the public, it had been used for this purpose already, and when such a use was officially pointed out for it in the future, it was quite clear that the trustees themselves were qualified to remain in it.

The *Herald of Progress* aforesaid, in which I was concerned,

was the continuation of that official record of the proceedings of the communist affairs which had been so long made in the *New Moral World*. The society of many names — Co-operative, All Classes of All Nations, National Religionists, but always communist at heart—had been declared extinct by lapse of members, at a congress at Rose Hill. This was not true, as in London and Sheffield members continued to pay, and therefore legally represented the interests of the society's subscribers in every town, who held what was called community scrip, and the *Herald* in question was maintained from a sense of duty to represent the interest of these superseded but deserving members. To this end a new Central Board was appointed, a president and general secretary. In the *Herald of Progress*, which was published from October, 1845, to May, 1846, the official addresses of the society appeared. In May, 1846, the *Reasoner* was commenced, which continued the official representation of the Queenwood society, and the history of its final proceedings were given in that journal alone. Thirty volumes of the *Reasoner* were issued between 1846 and 1872, edited by the present writer, in which the advocacy of Co-operation, as contemplated by its founders, was continued. The thirtieth volume was under the commercial charge of the leaders of Co-operation in Lancashire and Yorkshire, who had arisen since the Queenwood days, and who inherited the traditions of those honourable and unsuccessful struggles.

The cessation of Queenwood was primarily caused by insufficient capital to last while the new order of life consolidated itself, and the conditions of industrial profit were found. Astute farmers sometimes find that they must vary the nature of their produce to realise profit. It could be no argument against a communistic estate that its managers did not all at once make a profit by it. The chief charge brought against the management was that too much money was spent upon the Hall, which was but another form of saying that the capital was too small—since the Hall was not out of proportion to the estate rented, the educational convenience required, and the effect to be produced upon the alien and outside public. Miscellaneous as were the members collected together, they were all believers in the principle on which they associated; and there were none who did not deplore the day of parting

when it came. Working members said they would rather live on an Irish diet of potatoes than go again into the old world, of which they had had experience, if that would enable the society to hold on. Mr. Ironside, who had a few thousand pounds—all his available means—said he would throw it into a common fund, if others who had similar means would do the same, so that they might go on. Residents—and there were many who were boarders in the community—all regretted the end of their tenancy. To this day few who survive, who were there in any capacity, but regret the loss of the happy days which, till the end approached, were spent at Queenwood. Ladies, who are always difficulties in a new state of association, came to prefer Queenwood life. Some who were at first unhappy in the changed condition in which they found themselves there, and who made their husbands unhappy who brought them there, eventually liked their new life exceedingly. Others who were tartars in their social relations in the old world—just women at heart, but impatient of the crude wayward ways of domestics—there became the most agreeable and honoured of residents. It was not because they had to control their tempers, but because the occasions of natural irritation no longer existed under the happier circumstances of equality of duties and enjoyment.

The inmates of Queenwood ate as they listed. No restriction was put upon their preferences. There was a vegetarian table, at which some twenty dined, and, to the credit of their simple diet be it said, theirs was the merriest table in the hall. At meal-times it resounded with laughter, and often others came and surrounded it to listen to the pleasantries which abounded there. The present writer published an account of a personal visit to Harmony Hall.[1] My publication of it was an error. At that time it was the duty of all members to continue to support the executive who had hitherto governed, since the party who would change the administration had not the means to take affairs into their own hands. It was far better to suffer disappointment at the limitation of community objects than to witness the enterprise brought to a premature end. It was long before I discovered for myself, that truth was not relevant on all occasions because it was true. No man

[1] "Visit to Harmony Hall," reprinted from the *Movement*, 1844.

may speak a lie or act a lie; but of all that he knows to be true he is only warranted in stating that which is relevant and useful. It may be a well-ascertained fact that the Home Secretary has changed his bootmaker, but it would be irrelevant in a debate upon the Budget. It was well known to be true that Mr. Disraeli was "on the side of the angels"; nothing came of it, and we were obliged to have Moody and Sankey to put things right; therefore, however true, it was no use impressing upon public attention Mr. Disraeli's seraphic alliance.

Inequalities of education and commercial experience were great, and conflict soon arose between the prudent and the infatuated. The "earnest," as they were called, were (as they commonly are) anxious to go forward with other people's money. The prudent were considered "timid," because the prudent were generally those who would have to pay if the project failed. The infatuated had only principle to put into the concern, since if they lost their stock mayhap they could acquire another; but those who lost their fortune might not be able so easily to repair that mischief. The enthusiastic would themselves incur all the risks they advise, were they in a position to do it. But this does not give them any right to vote a liability to others which they do not and cannot equally share. Yet this is constantly done in popular societies. The cheap-tongued orators of mere "principle" talk tall, and carry off all the applause, because their irresponsible followers are the majority; while the prudent, who "want to see their way," are put down as "discouraging persons." There is yet a subtler creature than the infatuated, to be encountered in societies of progress—the spontaneous enthusiast: sharp, quick, fertile, unthinking, who sets schemes going because they ought to go; others who regard those who have money as persons who should be made to pay, and calculate that if a good project is started, many who would not join in commencing it will subscribe rather than it should go down; and that those who have made advances will make more, in the hope of not losing what has been already lost. These are not the architects, they are the conspirators—they are not the administrators, they are the speculators of progress. The brilliant and plausible operators in this line commonly end in diffusing an ineradicable

distrust in the minds of those who have been trepanned into their enterprises. In matters of social progress, as in commerce, risks have to be run, and loss must be calculated upon. Some may risk fortune, some health, some even life, as many do in the public service ; and it will be an evil day for society when people are wanting to do it. Whoever enter upon these generous enterprises with their eyes open we honour as philanthropists, or patriots, or martyrs ; but they who trepan others into these sacrifices without their knowledge and consent are responsible for their ruin. Though a philanthropic motive may mitigate indignation, it does not excuse the crime of destroying others in the name of benevolence.

No social community in Great Britain had a long enough time allowed to give it a reasonable chance of succeeding. Had any gentleman supplied as much money to be experimented with as Sir Josiah Mason, of Birmingham, supplied during fruitless, disappointing, and perilous years to the Messrs. Elkington for perfecting the discovery of electroplating, some of these social colonies would have pulled through. Establishing a new world is naturally a more elaborate and protracted work than establishing a new manufacture. Electroplating turbulent and competitive man with pacific and co-operative habits, is a more serious affair than electroplating metals.

The social movement, indeed, had at times the good fortune to be countenanced and aided by persons of high position and large means. When Mr. Owen held his great meeting in Dublin in 1821, the Archbishops and other prelates and many noblemen appeared on the platform to support him. At one meeting Lord Cloncurry wrote to say that he was, to his great regret, prevented being present. But this was no formal evasion, though expressed in the well-known terms of avoidance ; he wrote a letter intended to serve the object, and afterwards sent £500 to further it. Frequently when steps were about to be taken likely to compromise the scheme before the public, the prudent had the wisdom to come to the front and dictate the steps which would lead to a surer success than those about to be taken at the instigation of the eager and uncalculating.

Despite all the eccentricities by which these new opinions were accompanied, and by which all new opinions are accom-

panied, it is right to honour these ardent agents of improvement, who both made sacrifices and incurred discomfort and disadvantages for no selfish end of their own, for their enthusiasm arose from the belief that everybody would be advantaged by the chance they sought. Though Coleridge had warned them that it was vain to be sane in a world of madmen, yet they resolved to run this risk, and do the best they could to introduce sane arrangements of life.

Social progress, though an old historic dream, and an anxious pursuit of so many persons, can hardly be said as yet to have a policy. It cannot be presumed that the rich ought to aid unless they are satisfied of the soundness of the plan put before them. To assume that Brown ought to subscribe because Jones thinks he should, is a sort of philanthropic confiscation of Brown's property. All that can be reasonably done is to ask Brown's attention to the scheme, with a full statement of the chances against its success as well as those in favour of it, and if he declines to take part in the affair it may be matter of regret, but not of reproach. Scrupulous care should be taken never to induce or allow any generous enthusiasts to advance more than they are ready and able to lose in case of failure. If they do more, and yet do not show regret when the day of loss or ruin comes, their relatives will ; and an unknown party of fierce and defamatory adversaries of social progress will be developed in society, active perhaps for two or three generations. No less disadvantage occurs if humbler and poor adherents are encouraged or suffered to do their utmost "for the cause." The Jewish tribute of a tithe of their means is as much as can be safely taken from the household resources. If more be taken the family suffer, and, what is worse, the family complain, and diffuse among all their neighbours and friends a dislike and distrust of the philanthropy which puts upon them privations without their consent.[1] And when the day of reaction comes to the over-taxed contributor, he forms the most dangerous disparager of the very undertaking he himself

[1] My attention was engaged very early in popular movements by the fact that the most discouraging persons were those who had suffered losses in earlier enterprises. They had been heroes of forlorn hopes. There was reason to believe that had their sacrifices been limited to a tenth of their resources of time and money, they had never lost interest in struggles which did them honour to engage in.

has aided beyond his means. The extreme advocate commonly becomes the extreme adversary — defamatory, virulent, and vindictive ; and his discouraging word goes farther than that of the stranger who dislikes the thing offhand. Thus, as far as social progress is concerned, it is wise to have a policy, that it may be promoted by calculable methods.

When confident promises are made in the name of a new project, the public expect some signal fulfilment, and when nothing comes of the great pretension, their interest in it is no more to be awakened in any generation which remembers its failure. This should be a warning to those who believe they have important untried truth on hand, never to risk the experiment which is to decide its validity until they have at command the best conditions known to be necessary for realising it. Better to disappoint the eager by delay, than premature action should cause failure. A great project will live from age to age. Delay may damage, but it never kills ; whereas inadequate action is always regarded by the majority as the failure of principle rather than the failure of men.

All this care, patience, toleration, labour, generous sacrifice, and endurance seemed fruitless. But these pioneers had, however, the proud consolation expressed for them by the great Midland poetess :—

> "The greatest gift the hero leaves his race
> Is to have been a hero. Say we fail :
> We feed the high traditions of the world,
> And leave our spirit in our country's breast."[1]

[1] George Eliot.

CHAPTER XI

SOME OF THE PRINCIPAL ADVERSARIES

"Look closer to't; you make the evil first;
A base, then pile a heap of censures on it.
'Tis your own sin supplies the scaffolding
And mason work: you skilful, rear the grim
Unsightly fabric, and there point, and say,
'How ugly is it.' You meanwhile forget
'Tis your own handiwork."

CHARLES REECE PEMBERTON.

SOME account of the adversaries which the social pioneers had to encounter, will further elucidate the early history of co-operative enterprise.

The system of challenging everybody to discuss the new views produced some excitement. The clergy, who then never discussed long with anybody who answered them, naturally felt that these debates ought to be put down. Other persons did not like controversy, and though they would take no part themselves in suppressing it, were not unwilling to see it done. The teetotalers of Liverpool, who invented a new social crime, called Moderation, and rather apologised for the sot, actually suspended Mr. Finch, who had done more than all of them put together to advance temperance, and interdicted him from speaking on platforms in their name, because of his social notions. In Birmingham an honest Quaker shoemaker, named Empson, had to obtain a situation, but requiring testimony to his character as a sober man, he applied to Mr. John Cadbury, a well-known, influential, kind-hearted, and exemplary Quaker of the town, to give him a testimonial. Mr. Cadbury being secretary to the temperance society, who had known Empson many years as

a good teetotaler, was naturally sought to certify to the fact. Mr. Cadbury (whose handsome calves were the admiration of Birmingham, and who wore breeches the better to show them) answered as only a conventional Quaker can, "William Empson, I want to hold no communion with thee, and I have ordered others to hold no communion with thee. Thou recollects the conversation I had with thee about John Finch, of Liverpool, when I told thee he was a blasphemer." "Yes," said Mr. Empson, "I said if Mr. Finch comes to Birmingham I will do all I can to get him a temperance meeting; but, Mr. Cadbury, you have long known me as a prominent member of the temperance society, will you give me a character for sobriety?" Mr. Cadbury answered, "No, William Empson." "But," said Empson, "are you not a Christian, sir?" Mr. Cadbury answered, "Yes, William Empson, I am, and I always respected thee, but I do not want to hold any communion with thee."

The chief reason why persecution is so hateful is that it so frequently succeeds in putting down the truth. Well-directed persecution is a great power, like assassination. The Bishop of Exeter, whose claims for dignity in the Church were not godliness, but vigorousness and virulence, well understood that. Tory pamphleteering had done more for him than divinity, and he naturally came forward in the House of Lords to revile the grey-headed philanthropist, Mr. Owen, who had given his fortune to mitigate the lot of the poor. Lord Normanby had presented Mr. Owen at Court. Her Majesty, with that queenly impartiality with which she recognised every man of distinction who has served the nation, was glad to meet the ancient friend of her father. In Owen's intimacy loans had passed between him and the Duke of Kent, which the Queen repaid when she knew it. Good taste, if good feeling did not, should have kept the bishop silent concerning a presentation so honourably accorded, and which in no way concerned him. The bishop's speech in the House of Lords was thus reported in the *Morning Chronicle*, of January 27, 1840, by George Wallis ("Pencil 'em"):—

> "He wished of his task he could be rid:
> For he felt a horror, indeed he did,
> Yet had seen and heard with profound disgust,
> Their deeds of shame, and their words of lust.

He was able to tell them all, he said,
The nauseous tale, from A to Z.
And he thought the Marquis of Normanby
Might relish the tale as well as he.
The Socialists were the vilest race
That ever on earth or hell had place.
He would not prejudge them—no, not he;
For his soul overflowed with charity.
Incarnate fiends, he would not condemn;
No, God forbid he should slander them;
Foul swine, their lordships must confess,
He judged them with Christian gentleness.
He hated all show of persecution,
But why weren't they sent to execution?
To hasty censures he objected,—
But was not Lord Normanby suspected?
He never believed a rash report,
But who took Robert Owen to Court?
He would not offend, but would fain be knowing,
If Normanby was not as loose as Owen?
And would ask, nought meaning by the hint,
Did he believe in God? for Owen didn't."

This was the spirit in which the Church commended itself to the people in those pleasant days.

The bishop made no idle speech. He meant mischief, and he did it. This was the time when Mr. William Pare, the registrar of Birmingham, lost his situation, and the town lost a publicist of a quality of knowledge which has never been replaced. All over the country working men of skill and character were dismissed from their employment for attending lectures upon the new principles of association. Some of the men became masters, and blessed the day when they were dismissed; and, as they became capable and relentless rivals of their former employers, the said employers did not bless the Bishop of Exeter for his services. Many workmen were ruined, others had to emigrate; and I have heard them say that if they can get at the Bishop of Exeter in the other world, either above or below, they will make things very uncomfortable to him. As the sharp-tongued bishop, clever in all things, prolonged his life to a great age, some of them thought he desired to delay the day of meeting them as long as possible.

When bishops are angry the people are grateful, Mr. Pare experienced this. On his leaving Birmingham, a dinner was given to him, November, 1842. Mr. Pare was then councillor of the ward of St. Thomas. Mr. G. F. Muntz, M.P., was present, and said, "if he was asked who he should appoint

to take charge of business requiring great care, great investigation, and great honesty, he should say Mr. Pare was the man to do it. It was not the second, nor the third, nor the tenth time he had made that statement. If every man had worked in the cause of reform as Mr. Pare had done, no man could calculate what would have been the effect."

Men of mark who showed any civility to co-operators were scolded in a grand way. One of the quarterlies was disagreeable to the poet laureate. It said: "Mr. Southey brings to the task two faculties which were never, we believe, vouchsafed in measure so copious to any human being—the faculty of believing without a reason, and the faculty of hating without a provocation. He seems to have an instinctive antipathy for calm, moderate men—for men who shun extremes and render reasons. He has treated Mr. Owen, of Lanark, for example, with infinitely more respect than he has shown to Mr. Hallam and Dr. Lingard; and this for no reason that we can discover, except that Mr. Owen is more unreasonably and hopelessly in the wrong than any speculator of our time."[1] Happily poet laureates have succeeded Southey equally incapable of being intimidated out of sympathy with the fortunes of honest, self-helping industry, as Tennyson did.

A number of wandering and flockless preachers hawked challenges from town to town. One was a Mr. John Bowes, a pachydermatous believer, who was not without the gift of imputation, and with whom many discussions were held. In a discussion of some nights which I held with him in Bradford, he gave me the idea that he was a species of moral rhinoceros. Apart from the religious vices of imputation which passed in those days for holy zeal, he was known as a friend of temperance and political freedom, and died in 1874 in Dundee well stricken in years, after forty years of Wesleyan-like activity as a peregrinating preacher.

The best qualified adversary who occupied co-operative attention for a long period was the Rev. Joseph Barker, a restless Wesleyan local preacher, who had not been used well by his own party, and he avenged himself by never

[1] The student of social progress in this country scarcely needs to be reminded that it was Southey who held out a helping hand to the promoters of co-operation (Leigh Hunt).

treating any other party well. He published pamphlets against social principles, always readable for their invective, but not instructive, as the objections he brought were entirely theological. The social advocates, who always had an appetite for an adversary, found Mr. Barker much occupation. He excelled most men who as Christians destroyed respect for Christianity. The overwhelming majority of social reformers were believers in the precepts of Christ, and desirous of being associated with what would now be admitted as practical Christianity. Mr. Barker had great command of Saxon-English and poetic imagination; so that whatever side he adopted, and he adopted every side in turns, he presented it with a force of speech which commanded attention. He was not a man who originated thought, but in discerning all that could be made of thought which he found originated, he excelled as a popular expounder of it. The imputations he made upon those who differed from whatever views he happened to hold at the time would have amounted to a crime, had it been an intellectual act of his mind; but, as his rotary imputations were applied by turns to every party to which he had ceased to belong, it was merely the expression of an irresponsible extremist. He left to the adherents of every opinion that he espoused, a legacy of exposition and denunciation which no other man contributed in his time.[1]

Of all the opponents who were encountered, the most impudent was a person known subsequently as Dr. Brindley. Mr. Hawkes Smith, of Birmingham, having delivered some lectures on phrenology, after a visit of Mr. George Combe to that town, Mr. Brindley attacked it. The present writer advised Mr. Hawkes Smith to answer him. Mr. Smith knew all about the subject, and Mr. Brindley nothing. Not being able to reply, Mr. Brindley attacked Mr. Hawkes Smith for his advocacy of Mr. Owen's views. This excited the applause of the clergy, who were willing that the new social principles should be denounced by some one, and Dr. Brindley was

[1] After years of defamation he wrote me a public letter, expressing his regret and conviction that the views he had so strenuously opposed were true. Afterwards he had correspondence with Mr. Owen to the same effect, and sought an interview with him, which was readily granted, See letters in *Co-operative News*, July 9, 1904.

engaged to do it. He became the Caliban of the Church. He did not issue from a Cave of Adullam, where all who were discontented were invited ; but from a Cave of Vituperation, where all who uttered rude words of Mr. Owen, or had offensive imputations to make against his followers, were welcome. He went on his mission of defamation to our manufacturing towns, and counselled employers to dismiss men of far honester repute than his own ; and scores of families were brought into distress by his calumnious tongue. His prayer was literally—

> "Lord, in thy day of vengeance try them ;
> Lord, visit them who did employ them."

Brindley was originally a travelling comb-seller. It was to his credit that he became a schoolmaster—but he continued a pedlar in piety. As a disputant he was not without some good qualities. He was not afraid of discussion. He never sheltered himself under German mysticism or occult or transcendental interpretations, but stated and defended the broad, vulgar, orthodox Christianity of the day, from which abler, wiser men shrunk. He perished at last in the streets of New York. Ministers of religion in America were more scrupulous than in England, and did not adopt him. Dr. Hollick, a social missionary who had debated with Brindley in England, was living in New York, but did not hear of his fate until it was too late, else, he wrote, he would have rendered succour to his old adversary in his last extremity. Brindley had professed to follow Mr. Bradlaugh to America. It is impossible not to feel sympathy for the fate of the old combatant. He died like the war horse, sniffing battle from afar, when age had weakened his powers without being able to tame his spirit.

Moved by a generous eagerness to turn men's attention to the power which dwelt in circumstances, Mr. Owen devised the instructive phrase, that "man's character was formed for him and not by him."[1] He used the unforgettable inference that "man is the creature of circumstances." The school of material improvers believed they could put in permanent force

[1] This troublesome proposition, Mr. Bray relates, "was one upon which his followers, without exception, took their stand." By a resolution of the proprietors of Orbiston, the tenants had to sign their assent to it before admission into the society.

right circumstances. The great dogma was their charter of encouragement. To those who hated without thought it seemed a restrictive doctrine to be asked to admit that there were extenuating circumstances in the career of every rascal. To the clergy with whom censure was a profession, and who held that all sin was wilful, man being represented as the "creature of circumstances," appeared a denial of moral responsibility. When they were asked to direct hatred against error, and pity the erring—who had inherited so base a fortune of incapacity and condition—they were wroth exceedingly, and said it would be making a compromise with sin. The idea of the philosopher of circumstances was that the very murderer in his last cell had been born with a staple in his soul, to which the villainous conditions of his life had attached an unseen chain, which had drawn him to the gallows,[1] and that the rope which was to hang him was but the visible part. Legislators since that day have come to admit that punishment is justifiable only as far as it has preventive influence. To use the great words of Hobbes, "Punishment regardeth not the past, only the future."

Dr. Travis, an early and influential disciple of Mr. Owen, proposed a new statement of the doctrine of character; which, while it recognises the causation of the will, admits a self-determining power in man, which justifies instruction being given to him, and appeals being made to him. One who is in the foremost rank of those who have thrown light over ravelled questions of controversy, remarks, "Instead of saying that man is the creature of circumstance, it would be nearer the mark to say that man is the architect of circumstance."[2]

It would, therefore, be unjust to imply that adversaries, clerical or lay, always gratuitously misunderstood questions. There were statements made, which often left them open to honest misconception. The great masters of statements sometimes fail to convey an exact impression of their meaning. I have seen Mr. Cobden look at his words as though they were palpable to him in the air, retracting doubtful terms, amplifying the deficient, and qualifying those that went too far. Those

[1] See this idea, which is better expressed by my old friend Thom, the poet, of Inverary, in the preface to his poems.

[2] G. H. Lewes' "Life of Goethe."

who had none of Mr. Cobden's experience and sagacity, must have misled many fair-meaning opponents.

Mr. Owen gave emphasis to the doctrine of the mighty influence of material things over man for good or evil, because that was not acknowledged then. As far as belief was concerned, that, he said, was so entirely commanded by evidence, that a man could not be held responsible for conclusions which evidence justified.

There is one town (Leicester) where social views early took root—where a few men of strong understanding, of unusual dispassionateness, have, during more than two generations, maintained public interest in social ideas. What may be called the Leicester principle of controversy is to question and try all assertions. No person in the society meetings there advances any propositions except under the condition of submitting them to discussion. Dr. Brindley, when I last met him on a platform, proposed to debate the question of Atheism. This I refused to do, as it would lead the public to confound atheistic with secular principles. That the pretensions of dogmatic Theism should not be advanced unquestioned, Mr. Josiah Gimson, a resident engineer in the town, met Dr. Brindley several nights in succession, contributing greatly to the public information upon the subject. Elsewhere no instance has occurred in which a private gentleman had stepped forward in this way to discuss such a topic—the town fully understood and respected the courage and independence of the proceeding on his part. This was in 1873. Professor Tyndall, after one of his addresses at the Dundee meeting of the British Association, which had somewhat amazed the Duke of Buccleugh, the president for the year, said generously to the present writer, in reference to the toleration of modern controversies, "We do but reap where you [which included colleagues with whom I had acted] have sown."

Jeremy Taylor, nearly two hundred years before Owen, wrote: "No man can change his opinion when he will, or be satisfied in his reason that his opinion is false, because discountenanced. If a man could change his opinion when he lists, he might cure many inconveniences of his life; all his fears and his sorrows would soon disband, if he would but alter his opinion, whereby he is persuaded that such an

accident that afflicts him is an evil, and such an object formidable; let him but believe himself impregnable, or that he receives a benefit when he is plundered, disgraced, imprisoned, condemned, and afflicted, neither his sleep need be disturbed, nor his quietness discomposed. But if a man cannot change his opinion when he lists, nor ever does heartily or resolutely but when he cannot do otherwise, then to use force may make him a hypocrite, but never to be a right believer; and so, instead of erecting a trophy to God and true religion, we build a monument for the devil." [1]

The conclusiveness of these authorities availed us nothing. It was regarded as a new sin in the social party to show that eminent men had agreed in principle with them. Vindictiveness of the enemy harmed the movement by making many resentful and retaliative, prone to follow the advice of St. Just, who destroyed many excellent reformers by his maxim that they who attempt half measures dig their own graves. But St. Just's maxim did not keep him alive long enough to observe that they who insist upon whole measures while they are only half supported, commonly get themselves and their cause into the sexton's hands very early.

Only theorists talk of truth being immortal—I have seen it put to death many times. Lord Brougham in his day succeeded in terrifying Parliament into toleration of unpopular opinions, by contending that nothing could extend them but persecution. If brave men stand by unfriended truth, persecution will spread it. If the timid, or ease-loving, or the time-serving, have truth in hand, persecution well directed, will soon put it down. This is the real reason why persecution is intrinsically hateful.

Other agitations brought into play the passions: of the social agitation it must be owned that it appealed to the understanding only, and made men inquiring and reflective. The intellect let loose proved no wild animal needing a chain to restrain it, as Cardinal Newman [2] asserts, but a salutary and self-managing agent, active in improving individual character.

Adversaries of the Socialists were not dainty in their imputa-

[1] "Liberty of Prophesying."

[2] Cardinal Newman forgets altogether the wild animals reared in his chosen Church, of which Torquemada was the chief.

tions. The Rev. Mr. Anderson, of Glasgow was a man of character and talent, and of generous political sympathies, and from whom in later years I oft had the pleasure, through my friend Mr. William Logan, a wise city missionary, to receive valued communications; yet in his vehement days Dr. Anderson called the "Very Reverend and Preliminary Social Father" an "Incestuous Profligate." But this was not very objectionable, in a rhetorical sense; for when an angry adversary departs from the truth the farther he departs the better, and he is placed by the concurrence of common judgment outside the pale of those who are to be regarded. Some opponents did not know the truth when they saw it, and did not speak it even by mistake. Some of them did garble with an ability that would have entitled them to a prize medal, had there been any board of examiners to award distinction to that kind of merit; but in controversy he who recognises these peculiarities arrests altogether the progress of his arguments, and invites attention to the adversary instead of the subject.

In February, 1834, the "Rev. Dr. Redford" published a letter in the *Worcester Journal*, against Mr. Owen. The *Crisis*, following the policy of helping the enemy to abuse its friends, published this letter, which I shall not reproduce.

In Worcester, the religious opposition to co-operative speeches amounted to violence. It was only by the effort of a strong-handed carpenter, whom I well knew, and in whose house I subsequently lived, one Robert Jones, that Mr. Owen's life was saved from an infuriated mob.[1] The Rev. Dr. Redford was an adversary who went great lengths. In a public discussion, he committed upon Mr. Owen an indignity which created a stronger hostility to Christianity than anything else which had occurred in the Midland counties. He made a motion of flinging the contents of his nose into Mr. Owen's face.

Mr. Alexander Campbell, the most fatherly-minded of all the missionaries, whose voice sounded like a truce, was forcibly prevented preaching the new gospel of industry on Glasgow Green on Sundays. It was a common thing to have halls

[1] I have heard that Jones, as years advanced, joined the Methodists. If so, he has a double chance of salvation if his creed be good, for he has generous works to plead, as well as faith.

refused after they had been duly let, and no County Court Judge in those days would award any damages for a breach of faith. Riots took place at the Broadmead Rooms, Bristol, upon the "social innovators." No doubt the innovators often retaliated, but the imitation generally fell far short of the original.[1]

In Bristol there was a dangerous fight through the narrow passage leading to the Broadmead Rooms, occupied by the Socialists in that city. Workmen were sometimes dismissed who were observed to have a copy of the *New Moral World* in their possession. In some cases clergymen refused to bury co-operators, and in one case a sexton refused to dig a grave for a Socialist's child. Mr. Connard, a well-known speaker, who became an insolvent, was stigmatised as deranged because he honourably refused to make oath, as not in accordance with his conscience, and Mr. Commissioner Reynolds sent him back to prison with many words of outrage when he could otherwise have discharged him. Mr. Connard was kept in prison many months, as a punishment for his creditable scruples. The Rev. Mr. Giles, a Baptist minister of disagreeable ability, said "Socialism was a union of all practices, save those of chastity and virtue." Had the showers of denunciation been material, like hail or rain, the pioneers would have lost their hats, and their garments would have been sodden.

When Mr. Owen was a boy, he swallowed some scalding food in his anxiety to reach his school early. His digestion was very much weakened by it, he was obliged to be very careful in the food which he took. In illustrating his belief of the influence of circumstances, he related this event as one which early disposed him to observation and care. With his oft indifference to what advantage might be taken of a casual expression, he mentioned that the food which he partook,

[1] Indeed, piety was not always self-respecting in its company, nor very dainty in its invitations. There were those who remember the Rev. W. Cooper, for instance, reading in hymn-books sturdy verses beginning—

"Come dirty, come stinking, come just as you are—"

an invocation of fine Saxon vigour, but not remarkable for delicacy. Nor did noblemen and clergymen then shrink from countenancing such style of address, any more than they have done in the case of Moody and Sankey and the Salvation Army, and if not deeming it good enough for themselves, at least thinking it might do the people good.

common in Wales in his youth, was called flummery. As this word was a slang term for untrustworthy speech, clerical speakers thought it an excellent point to say that the social system began in flummery.[1] This was deemed very witty, and always produced peals of laughter.

In Runcorn, a Mrs. Johnson left the Established Church and went over to the Wesleyan chapel. She was called upon to explain her proceeding. She replied that it was on account of her Sunday pie being exactly done when the Methodist chapel came out; whereas when she attended the church it was always overdone. The good woman regulated her piety by her pastry, a circumstance which influenced her faith. When the familiar vehicle we now see in the streets without terror first appeared in a university county, a peasant, in the vicinity of an Oxfordshire village, ran one night to warn the inhabitants that a frightened monster with saucer eyes, and making a strange noise, was coming towards the place. Those who had courage got behind the hedge to look. The monster turned out to be a post-chaise,[2] with two lamps. The clergy always mistook social science for an Oxford post-chaise, and ran out to alarm the people.

A fair, a clever, and gentlemanly opponent met with great respect and regard when one appeared, which was very seldom. The Rev. J. H. Roebuck held a public discussion with Mr. Owen, in Manchester, in 1837. He was a Wesleyan of remarkable ability and remarkable fairness, and the distinctness of his objections were well seen in consequence. Though he was, therefore, a more influential adversary than vituperative ones, he was always spoken of with respect, and his early death was sincerely deplored.

The old pioneers of Co-operation stood up for liberty and and relevance of speech. Some thought toleration meant indifference to what opinion prevailed. This was the mistake which some still make. Toleration means anxiety for the

[1] Charles Knight, in his "Passages of a Working Life," gives an account of his tour in 1828, to gain support for the Useful Knowledge Society. He tells us that at Liverpool he found a few *clerical* opponents, and one of them preached also against mechanics' institutes; at Manchester no clerical support could be obtained; and at York he could do little. "He found the commercial atmosphere better adapted for the diffusion of secular knowledge than was the ecclesiastical."

[2] Joseph Brosbridge, 1824.

truth : it means ardour for the truth : it means confidence in the truth. It believes that truth, like fire, is excited by collision, and that no truth can be known to be true, save that which has passed through the ordeal of controversy. Toleration means giving new truth fair play. Intolerance, which is prohibition, gives it none. The conditions of truth are now well ascertained to be liberty of expression, and of criticism ; it is not he who is tolerant of these, but he who is intolerant of them, who is indifferent to the truth, and upon whom the stigma of looseness and latitudinarianism of mind ought to fall.

CHAPTER XII

EARLY ADVOCATES

"So when the Parthian turned his steed,
And from the hostile camp withdrew,
With cruel skill the backward reed
He sent; and as he fled he slew."

Louis Blanc has described the Jacobin as powerful, original, sombre; half agitator and half statesman; half Puritan and half monk; half inquisitor and half tribune. The co-operative advocates were not wanting in some of these qualities; and in perseverance and propagandist capacity they surpassed all working-class advocates of their time. They certainly were not demagogues, as any one may see from the definition of a modern writer who comprises in one short passage a complete study of those troublesome persons.[1] Our early advocates chose the unpopular side, which was ill-requited; they believed in their measures themselves, their lives and industry alike commanded respect, and their disinterestedness was shown in persisting in a course which was far from bringing them flattering recognition. The Duke of Wellington, when they were brought under his notice, admitted they were clever, but added, in his coarse, vindictive way, "they were clever devils." With more discrimination

[1] "The demagogue, in all ages and in all countries, is a man voluble and vehement in speech—expansive and popular in his humour—more plausible in advocating measures than wise in choosing them—unscrupulous in his alliances with all who will serve his immediate objects—extreme in his views—magnificent in his promises—ready with specious theories and proposals of sweeping change—restless in agitation, but impatient of obscure labour—aiming at immediate and showy results—and, from a loose and random way of living, often not a safe man in pecuniary affairs, although he may have no inclination for deliberate dishonesty" (C. Morrison, "Labour and Capital," p. 126).

and courtesy, as befitted his station, the Bishop of London said of these social reformers, that, though they were generally men of "some education," their deficiency was that "they were wanting in humble docility, that *prostration of the understanding ana will*, which are indispensable to Christian instruction." No doubt they were open to this charge; want of "humble docility" was conspicuous in them. It never occurred to them to "prostrate their understanding." The use of it seemed to them the only way of making out how things stood.

These adventurous and unskilled social navigators had to pull their frail skiffs through rough waters. At that time society abounded with persons—they are not yet quite extinct—who would never do anything for the workman except think for him. They would neither find him work nor bread, but they would supply him with opinions, either religious or political, ready-made. These people gave a very poor account of social projects. The political economist considered them the dream of folly—the clergyman, of wickedness—the statesman, of insubordination—the employer, of idleness—the rich man, of plunder—the capitalist, of confiscation—the journalist, of demagogism.

Co-operation in its early days was somewhat ramshackle. Mostly pale and thin, these amateur shopmen looked as though they needed themselves to eat up the commodities they tried to sell. What business they did was done in an unusual way. Every crotchet that thickened the air of Utopia was proclaimed at their doors. Poets, enthusiasts, dreamers; reformers of all things, and the baser sort of disbelievers in any, gave them a turn: for, as we all know, a nimble eccentricity always treads on the heels of change.[1] There was nobody so mad but their right to improve the world was respected; there was not a regenerating lunatic at large who did not practise upon them. The philosophers were scandalised at them, the political economists shook their heavy heads at them—the newspapers were scornful—politicians in Parliament proposed to put them down—bishops interdicted them in the House of Lords—and the clergy consigned them individually and collectively to per-

[1] "Licentiousness always treads on the heels of reformation" (R. W. Emerson).

dition. Luckily the honest fellows had a well-instructed patience. Their advocates served them well, teaching them that every creature must be allowed to articulate after its kind, and would do better if it only knew how. The heretics, who were their only friends, eventually silenced the clamour; and the men of sense and purpose made their way to the front, and Co-operation got a hearing, and grew in favour with men.

As in all new parties, and as for that in old ones too, at times there were figures in the social landscape that attracted attention, without enticing adherents. Fastidious friends of progress were not pleased that the prominent advocate of the system should be an Irish philosopher—Mr. Thompson, of Cork—who was against large families, and in favour of dissection. Social Reformers, not knowing how to subordinate without discouraging the just efforts of others, became the Nursing Mother of all the "Crazes" of the day.

There was a Dr. McCormac, of Dublin, who, being like Bentham, a philosopher above vulgar prejudice, prominently advocated that all co-operators should leave their bodies for anatomical purposes. He was called the "Skeleton-Man" of the movement; and some Christian partisans did not hesitate to say that Mr. Owen wanted to get men into communities in order to sell their bodies for dissection. Every friend of the new system was supposed already to have sold his soul to a certain eminent and enterprising contractor for that article. As to Mr. Owen, it must be owned charity was his sole religion, and this was a religion which God may recognise but which has not found favour in the world yet; and one which had no followers in Mr. Owen's days except a few perilous persons, of whom the Rev. Robert Hall, with his fine talent for contemptuousness, said "lived in the frigid zone of Christianity." Mr. Owen himself was called the "Circumstantial Philosopher"—a name not without honour, for circumstances were in very bad want of a philosopher.

One of the strange and inexplicable figures that flitted about the early co-operative movement was a gentleman who usually signed himself as P. Baume, "reforming optimist." [1]

[1] The profession of principles of the Reforming Optimist was that though everything is for the best at this instant, everything will be better upon the whole surface of our planet at every one of its diurnal revolutions—nay, at every pulsation of the human heart.

In after-years two or three other initials would appear between the P. and the B. Who, indeed, he was, or whence he came, nobody ever knew. Common repute said he acquired a fortune as a foreign spy. If so, it was doubtless in the interest of freedom, for he always appeared to care for it. He had spent the greater part of a long and wondrously active life in bequeathing property which nobody ever came to possess. For thirty years there was hardly any meeting held anywhere in reference to social reform at which he was not present in some part. He was ubiquitous. In distant towns, in Manchester or Liverpool, the eyes in search of mysterious faces would be sure to light, in some quarter of the room, upon a disguised figure, whose brilliant, penetrating eye alone revealed his identity.

Mr. Baume had what he called Experimental Gardens, in the New North Road, leading from Battle Bridge to Holloway, where he invited all practical men and women to meet him, with a view to agree upon something which would settle everything. The presumption is that they never did agree upon anything, since everything has not been settled yet. His proposal at that time was to establish a Co-operative College, for which purpose he said he would unhesitatingly and most cheerfully give up to them his most valuable leases and ground rents—several extensive plots for building and gardening ground, fourteen acres altogether, his funded property, his ready money, in a word, everything he possessed; "including his most unrelenting exertions through life." Mr. Baume had made a proposition to advance money to any amount, and on the most liberal terms, to any carpenter or bricklayer willing to build cottages on his land, on speculation, or for the location of their families. He stated then that all his property was vested in the hands of trustworthy characters; his unremitting exertions being devoted to the establishment of a Co-operative College and Community.

At one of Mr. Owen's Sunday lectures he sent a little boy with a note, saying the lad had been born three years before, and had been entrusted to his care, but he had never allowed him to be christened because he had never found

any character in history sufficiently perfect to warrant him in adopting his name; but now Julian Hibbert was dead, he requested Mr. Owen to christen him by that name. Mr. Owen, and many of his disciples after him, were accustomed to christen children who were brought to them, and they commonly made little speeches to the parents, counselling them to remember how much sensible treatment and pure material conditions might influence the child for good.

This gentleman continued to give his property away. He gave it to nearly every community that was formed. He gave it to the United Kingdom Alliance. He has given it to the co-operators, and to other persons and parties, certainly too numerous to mention. A considerable portion of his property lay in the neighbourhood of Colney Hatch. He always professed to be afraid that some one would confine him in a lunatic asylum, and yet he established himself in the neighbourhood of one. There was not the slightest fear for him. There was no aslyum which would have undertaken to manage him. He would have driven the governors and directors all mad in a month, by the inexhaustible fertility of his projects. He was quite sincere in saying he would give the whole of his possessions away, as well as his "unrelenting life exertions," for he appeared never to require anything whatever to live upon. A few peas, which he commonly carried in his pocket, seemed to be his chief source of subsistence. With ample means he would live in one obscure room, or rent a railway arch, and deposit himself there, and he did not, like the parties in Mr. Pickwick, select the dry ones, but took a damp one as being the cheapest. He would carry about with him bundles of bank-notes in a dress-coat pocket, and keep a small live monkey there; so that if any adventurous hand found its way there, it would meet with a very unexpected remonstrance. His property, at the site of the Experimental Gardens, lay over what is now known as the Caledonian Road, and the Pentonville Prison part, and had he retained it a few years longer than he did, he might have derived an immense income from it. At that time his land was covered with furze and mysterious-looking cottages, in one of which he lived. It was known as the "Frenchman's Island," where very unpleasant visitors

were frequently attracted; but as he was known to go about at night with a pistol in his pocket, and as he was very likely to fire it, and knew perfectly well how to do it, a good deal of curiosity was repressed by that peculiar reputation. He had projects for a community experiment there, and he brought more scandal upon the cause by his eccentric proposals than any other man.

One of the curious enthusiasts of 1837 was Samuel Bower, of Bradford. He was one of the abstemious co-operators who lived, like the Reforming Optimist, chiefly upon grey peas, of which he carried a supply about, and strenuously insisted that that peculiar diet should be universally adopted. Nevertheless, he was a strong-thinking man, and had many useful and self-denying views, which he illustrated in many curious and impracticable papers.

There were many among the advocates whose position and attainments commanded respect, else the movement could never have attained the ascendancy it did. One who remained longest known was "Dr. King, of Brighton."[1] This gentleman was educated for the Church, at Trinity College, Cambridge. He married a daughter of Dr. Hook, Vicar of Rottingdean. He subsequently adopted the medical profession, from intellectual preference, and settled in Brighton, where he originated and edited the first publication, called the *Co-operator*. He was a man of notable friendships, and promoted many liberal movements in conjunction with Dr. Birkbeck, Ricardo, Owen, and Lord Brougham. His daughter married Mr. John Robertson, well known as one of the early editors of the *Westminster Review*, during Mr. Mill's connection with it. Dr. King was justly considered one of the founders of Co-operation.

Dr. King continued his interest in Co-operation until the end of his life. On entering his eightieth year he wrote to the *Co-operator* a letter as enthusiastic as those he wrote half a century earlier, and which might have been

[1] Dr. William King was born at Ipswich in 1786. Gaining considerable distinction at Cambridge, he was elected a Fellow. He settled at Brighton. He assisted a co-operative society then established in West Street. On May 1, 1828, he issued the first number of the *Co-operator*, and continued it monthly until 1830. Dr. King died at Brighton in 1865.

written by a young convert. He had the honour of being consulted by Lady Noel Byron, who had contributed £300 towards the success of a productive association established among those Brighton societies.

Dr. King's *Co-operator* was a source of inspiration in many parts of the country, mere fragments of numbers being treasured up by the recipients. Stores have been founded in consequence of their perusal. The fairness, temper, and the certain moderation of tone rendered Dr. King's little paper, all the articles being written by himself, one of the wisely-influential precursors of Co-operation.

P. O. Skene, Esq., who is always mentioned as an "Esq.," appears frequently in early co-operative reports as a promoter, contributor, and medium by whom ladies and others made contributions. There was also a Mr. G. R. Skene, his brother; but being less personally distinguished he is described as *Mr.* G. R. Skene. Being very watchful and workful as a secretary, he deserves equal mention in these pages. In those days, when Co-operation was struggling, it was no doubt necessary to mark when one of its adherents held a position of more conventional respectability than others. "Philip O. Skene, Esq.," was really a very accomplished gentleman, an eminent teacher of languages in his day. He held a German class in the upper room of the first-named London Co-operative Store, 19, Greville Street, Hatton Garden. Mr. J. S. Mill and Mr. J. A. Roebuck, when young men, were among the remarkable pupils who attended.

The *Times* of 1837 gave a very honourable notice of Philip Orkney Skene. "His father, Major Skene, and grandfather, Governor Skene, were both attainted of high treason against the United States, as British Loyalists; and his great-grandfather was attainted of high treason in the rebellion of 1715. The *Times* stated that the Earl of Fife, who is a branch of the Skene family, had taken the estate which had previously descended from father to son for eight hundred years in the Skene family. Before Philip O. Skene was twenty years of age, he was sent to superintend the erection of the military fortification at Hoy Island, in the Orkneys. He joined the English army, entering Paris, in 1815, and from his great knowledge of the French and

German languages, was appointed to attend the Crown Prince of Prussia, whose sovereign, in distinction of his services, presented Mr. Skene with a valuable ring, set with numerous brilliants. After attaining much scientific distinction abroad, he returned to England, entered the Middle Temple, and ate several terms; when Mr. Owen's efforts at New Lanark, in its best days, so impressed his mind, that he devoted afterwards much of his time and means to promoting similar objects. Mr. Skene died at the age of 44, at Lewes, from exhaustion, after a protracted state of debility, brought on by over-exertion in his duties as surveyor of roads, a post which he had held for several years." The *Times* added, that "he left elementary works in German, Italian, French, Spanish, Latin, and Greek, besides works which bear other names than his."

At the (Third) Co-operative Congress, of 1832, a very remarkable letter was received from a distinguished man, Leigh Hunt, who dated it from 5, York Buildings, New Road, London. He alleged that "increasing avocations and ill-health alone prevented his attendance." Happily neither killed him until nearly thirty years later. He stated he believed he was the first journalist who endeavoured to impress upon the public the propriety of considering Mr. Owen's views. Touching the supposed contradiction between the claims of this life and a future one, he cited what was said by a wise man, "that it would be a very strange and ungrateful thing if we behaved ourselves gloomily or indifferently in a beautiful garden which some friend gave us, because by and by he had promised us a better."

Another name, always one of interest and respect, was that of Mr. Thomas Allsop, who, to the manners and cultivation of a gentleman, united an originality of sentiment and generous enthusiasm for political as well as social change, displayed with the same force and boldness by no other adherent of social views. A member of the Stock Exchange, he understood the conditions of business as well as those of the social state contemplated. He was the adviser of Feargus O'Connor in his best days, and conferred upon him the necessary property qualification which Mr. O'Connor did not possess when he was first elected a member of Parliament

viz., £300 a year derived from land. On one occasion Mr. Allsop, who was also connected with a large and fashionable business in Regent Street, alarmed the law courts and the press by refusing to be sworn upon a grand jury, on which he had often served, on the ground that he objected to find a prisoner guilty, alleging as a reason that in every part of London the criminal class was recruited by flagrant social neglect. This was done for the express purpose of forcing public attention to the subject. Such an act by one in Mr. Allsop's position produced a great impression.[1] In the late Mr. Justice Talfourd's memorial of Charles Lamb, the reader will find graceful acknowledgments of Mr. Allsop's long and helpful friendship to the great Essayist.

Another writer, who impressed society with the opinion that persons of taste and means were favourable to social views, was Mr. John Minter Morgan, author of "Hampden in the Nineteenth Century." This work appeared in two handsome volumes, and was printed in the costliest manner of books, with original copperplate illustrations of great skill, of good design, and finished execution, in mezzotint. Some of the scenes, dramatic and communistic, surpass in conception anything produced either before or since. The events of the story carry the reader into the highest society, and the dialogues conducted with the most eminent men of the day are gracefully rendered—their known and published sentiments being skilfully interwoven in the speeches made. If co-operative views had always been presented with as much judgment, they would have made wider way in the world. Mr. Morgan wrote other works, as the "Reproof of Brutus," and the "Revolt of the Bees," which attracted considerable attention in their day. The "Reproof of Brutus" was written in verse, but excited no jealousy among the poets of his time.

When a young man, Mr. Morgan displayed more courage than was to be expected from his gentle character. He appeared as a lecturer in the theatre at the Mechanics' Institution in defence of Mr. Owen's Sunday lectures. Mr. Morgan's lecture was delivered on Thursday, May 6, 1830. Mr. Owen had been permitted to deliver Sunday lectures in

[1] He is the author of "Recollections of Samuel Taylor Coleridge," who was his periodic Sunday guest for a great number of years.

that theatre morning, afternoon, and evening, on the "Moral and Social Duties of Man." The clergy, however, had interfered. Bishop Blomfield had spoken at King's College, and said that "all other sciences and acquirements than those of the Church of England and Ireland ought to be held subservient to those principles of action furnished by the doctrines of the Gospel." The members of the Mechanics' Institution were compelled, in deference to clerical opinion, to recommend a discontinuance of the Sunday morning lectures, as they were delivered during the hour of divine service. Mr. Tooke, the eminent solicitor of the institution, gave it as his opinion that the lectures were illegal, besides being calculated to compromise the usefulness of the institution. Mr. Tooke is mentioned by Mr. Morgan, who said that he had consulted with Mr. Brougham on the subject, who entirely concurred in that view. Mr. Morgan said that if Mr. Brougham was right in his opinion as to the lectures being illegal, it was incumbent on him, who stood so committed to the cause of mental liberty, to move the repeal of the Act. The Act is still unrepealed. Lord Amberley boldly endeavoured to procure its repeal. By ignominious evasions, lectures have continued to be delivered in London since; but as often as Christianity opens its dangerous eyes, and chooses to make itself offensive, it sends the philosophers home mute, with their lectures in their pockets.[1] Those who think that social reformers have at times troubled themselves needlessly with theology should take into account that their way has been blocked up by it all their days. Mr. Morgan, later in life, took fruitless trouble to induce the clergy to interest themselves in social reform. Gentlemen who were his guests at Sackville Street still tell how they were always escorted after dinner to see his model of a community, in which a church formed one of the ornaments. Mr. Morgan made his fortune as a paper-maker, which is probably one reason why he excelled other social writers in producing elegantly-printed books, whose clear and thick leaves and broad margins felt in the hand like a lucid and substantial argument.

Mr. William Pare was the first recognised co-operative

[1] This was done to Professor Huxley.

lecturer, and the most persuasive and persistently practical of them all. The editor of *The Co-operative Miscellany*, of 1830, introduced him for the first time to its readers in curious deferential terms as being their "very respectable and indefatigable friend." His first lecture was delivered where he spoke three times, in the Music Hall, Bold Street, Liverpool. There were four co-operative societies established in Liverpool at that time.

Mr. Thompson, of Cork, had the merit of satisfying Mr. William Pare of the utility and practicability of the co-operative system. His conviction was converted into ardour by Mr. Thompson's "Enquiry into the Distribution of Wealth." Mr. Pare first appears in co-operative literature at the anniversary of the first Birmingham Co-operative Society, at which he presided, on the 28th of December, 1829, at the Vauxhall Tavern, Ashted. Nearly a hundred persons were present, including some thirty of the members' wives, for co-operative tea-parties were from the first sociable, and included wives and children as well as husbands. Mr. Pare began by proposing the health of "the king in his social capacity of father of his people," which denoted the benevolence rather than the accuracy of the social imagination of the period. Mr. Pare quite understood then, and expressed at that early date, the policy of Co-operation as being "a scheme of voluntary equality"; and contended that the English were not to be confounded with French agitators. "The French," he said, "worked by force, the English by persuasion. The French cried 'Down with the aristocrats!' the co-operators said 'Let them alone.'" Mr. James Guest, the well-known bookseller of Birmingham, was vice-president on the occasion, and gave "Success to the numerous co-operative societies then established in England, Scotland, and America." One of the toasts was "The immortal memory of John Bellers, the first known projector of a co-operative community in England."

The sixth number of the *United Trades' Co-operative Journal* records that on Tuesday evening, March 30, 1830, Mr. Pare, the corresponding secretary to the First Birmingham Co-operative Society, delivered his first public lecture at the Mechanics' Institution, Manchester, remarking—"Mr. Pare

is a young man of very extensive practical information, deeply impressed with the evils which afflict the working classes of this country, and most zealous in his endeavours to disseminate that information which he thinks must ultimately produce a beneficial effect."

At Manchester, later in the year, he held a meeting at the house of one of the members of the first society, which was well attended, several persons were present belonging to the Stockport society. On three successive evenings he spoke in the theatre of the Mechanics' Institution. At his first lecture there were not less than one thousand persons present. Mr. Owen seldom distinguished any of his adherents by notice, but in Mr. Pare's case he did. He said, describing a visit he (Mr. Owen) made to Birmingham: "I found him engaged in the business of railways, which he appears to understand in his department of it, if we are to judge from the approbation he has received from the committees of both Houses of Parliament."[1] This instance shows with what judgment Mr. Owen could praise when he chose. Nothing could be more delicate, indirect, and uncompromising. Had he said more, or said it differently, it might have been disastrous to Mr. Pare. For more than forty years Mr. Pare was the tireless expositor of social principles. He learned early from Robert Owen the golden principle which Leigh Hunt so finely expressed, that "the errors of mankind proceed more from defect of knowledge than from defect of goodness." All the acerbities which ever arise in any of our societies arise from members who do not know this, or who forget it if they do. Mr. Pare seldom forgot it. His angerless voice and his pleasant patience were an endowment as strong as his general zeal, which never hasted and never rested until envious death took him from us.

Besides Mr. Pare, Mr. Hawkes Smith, and Mr. Murphy, there was Mr. John Rabone, also of Birmingham, whose pen was often to be met with in early co-operative literature. His letters in the volumes of the *Crisis* were always earnestly and pleasantly written, mainly appealing to Christians to recognise the spirit of Christianity in co-operative effort. It was his writings which first caused the name "Christian

[1] *New Moral World*, October 1, 1836.

Socialist" to be used, and in 1837 persons began to sign themselves by that name.

Another man of mark and promise in the early social movement was Rowland Detrosier, who died prematurely very much regretted by all politicians of the people in every part of Great Britain. Though well cared for at times by opulent friends, he had no sustained support, and exposure upon a coach, after a night lecture, when he was in a weakly state, brought on inflammation of the lungs, which killed him.[1] He was a man of greater promise than any who arose among the political and co-operative classes, and had he lived he would have been a leader. He had all the qualities of knowledge, enthusiasm, geniality, respect for the convictions of others, and powers of commanding address. Detrosier was the natural son of Mr. Robert Norris, of Manchester, and was abandoned, when a boy, by his French mother, whose name he bore. He was put to the trade of a fustian cutter. At nineteen he unfortunately married. By self-study, continued when he and his family were nearly famishing, he taught himself French and Latin, and acquired a knowledge of the sciences, which enabled him to lecture upon them in a manner which few professional lecturers of the day could excel, in communicating animated knowledge. He preached in a Swedenborgian chapel in Hulme, where he used to astonish the congregation by filling his pulpit with geological specimens, and placing electric and galvanic machines on the desk where his Bible and hymn-book should lie. He had the distinction of founding the first two Mechanics' Institutions ever established in England. As he had no support but that which his daily labour brought him, he often suffered extreme distress. His reputation, however, reached London, where he was welcomed. Jeremy Bentham had been so struck by some of his discourses that he sent him a present of his books, and showed him marks of flattering regard until his death. Lady Noel Byron sent him £20, and often invited him to her house in London. Mr. Mordan is said to have bestowed some of the earlier proceeds of his gold pens upon him, and Mr. John Stuart

[1] He had been delivering the opening lecture at the Mechanics' Institution, at Stratford, near London.

Mill not only befriended him while he lived, but befriended his family for many years after his death. It was, however, Leigh Hunt to whom he was indebted for his introduction to London: his name was first mentioned in a generous and discerning article in the *Examiner*, Leigh Hunt being greatly struck, as everybody was at that time, by his lecture on the Necessity of the Extension of Moral and Political Instruction among the Working Class. Detrosier had a voice and eloquence resembling Lord Brougham's, and his mind was distinguished by rapidity and power.

Mr. James Watson, one of those few publishers of forbidden literature, who gave consideration how far the reputation of his party might be promoted by his judgment in the books he sold, and by his personal probity, came up from Leeds, when a young man, to take the place of one of Carlile's shopmen, 500 of whom were imprisoned for selling unstamped publications, a fate which very soon befel Mr. Watson. He is recorded as acting as a co-operative missionary in Leeds, Halifax, Barnsley, Todmorden, and other places in connection with the British Association for Promoting Co-operative Knowledge. He is spoken of as "the first missionary to the country, and as having done great and permanent good." In one of his speeches Mr. Watson put the case of the working class co-operators in a suggestive form, thus:—"The co-operators would have those who had hitherto lived upon the labour of others henceforth live upon their own capital. They would then discover how long it would last"—unless recruited by the exertions of the industrious.

The name of Mr. Henry Hetherington appears as far back as the report of the fourth quarterly meeting of the British Association for the Promotion of Co-operative Knowledge, 1830, when he was elected one of the committee of the first Soho society. He was another publisher distinguished by a long career of peril. Straightforward, intelligent, hearty, genial, he was best known by the *Poor Man's Guardian*, which he edited, printed, and published, when no one else out of prison could be found to undertake the peril of it.

Another man of subsequent note, who took part in the early Congresses, was Mr. James Bronterre O'Brien, then the editor of the *Midland Representative*. He subsequently

suffered imprisonment in the cause of Chartism. An animated and able speaker, of very varied information, and possessing a considerable knowledge both of French and English literature, he was regarded as the political schoolmaster of the Chartists, but, like most Irishmen, his genius lay much in suspicion, in which he excelled; and he undid, by the distrust which he diffused, the good he was capable of accomplishing by his generous fervour. He it was who translated Buonarroti's "History of Babœuf," as we have said elsewhere. Bronterre had all the geniality of his countrymen. It was pleasant to be his friend.

Among other qualifications for the millennium displayed by energetic Socialists, was that of originality in figures of speech. One of the greatest masters in the rhetoric of the "New Moral World" was Mr. Joseph Smith, of Salford. When the Queenwood community was in force he went about the country collecting sheep with which to stock the farm. His plan was to rise at the end of a public meeting, and propose that all who had enthusiastically passed communist resolutions should prove their sincerity by joining there and then in subscribing a sum sufficient to buy a sheep. The most ardent who had held up their hands in favour of the motion of the evening, were not always prepared to put them in their pockets. To incline the surprised enthusiasts to that operation, Mr. Smith would apprise them that he had ordered the doors to be locked, so that no one could leave until the price of the sheep arrived on the platform. Then he would say they had bought a community, they must pay for the community, and they must stock the community, "else they would all fall into the abyss which was hanging over their heads." In view of this unforeseen calamity, reluctant shillings were produced until the market price of the coveted sheep was made up. When this was done, they were rewarded by being assured by Mr. Smith that "now they would all sail into port on the top of their watch-towers," a kind of vessel quite unknown to Her Majesty's constructor of the navy. This inventive rhetorician was described in the organ of the society as "the high priest of the 'New Moral World.'"

On other occasions he proved himself not deficient in old-

world illustration. He had been descanting with his accustomed fervour upon the deceptions of competitive commerce, when a curious auditor put the question—what did he mean by deception? The ardent and good-natured orator, who was commonly right when he felt, and wrong when he thought, had probably never given a public definition in his life, and was without any idea how to define deception. The meeting was large, hostile, and impatient, and the hesitation of the lecturer was loudly resented, when it suddenly occurred to Mr. Smith that his head was quite bald, and his black, curly, and unsuspected locks were not his own, so he boldly snatched off his wig and exclaimed: "That is deception." His raven hair, hanging in his hand like a scalp, and the sudden sight of his unimagined and naked pate was so ludicrous, that his adversaries were confounded and convinced, and with the generosity of an English audience, the enemy applauded him as heartily as his friends.

In those exalted days social editorial art went for nothing. No one troubled himself as to how the world would regard his language. Just as the early apostles never reflected how distracted fathers of the future Church would labour to reconcile their sayings (believing, as they did, that the end of all things was at hand, and there never would be any fathers to be perplexed), so these social seers expected that the "old immoral world" was played out, and that nobody in the new substitute they had in hand could ever heed anything said or done in it. Their least impulsive writer called the attention of two counties "to the active, the energetic, the devoted Fleming,"[1] and the editor asked "Where did Joseph Smith get his superior spirit of prophecy, and give us tablets of remembrance chiselled as it were in alabaster for purity, and gold for splendour and endurance."[2] I first visited him in 1879 at Wissahiccon, in America, where he kept a hotel whose great attraction was a large room, where ranging around it were small bushes of the district, on the branches of which he had carved, with his own hand, hundreds of political coteries, known to all the land—so life-like and natural, with likenesses so unmistakable, that they were the wonder and diversion of

[1] *New Moral World*, December 31, 1836, p. 75.
[2] Ibid., February 4, 1837.

thousands of visitors. Afterwards I sent him the first edition of these volumes, which he had never seen, and his sudden joy at the remembrance of him when he thought he had been forgotten—killed him. He had left England more than thirty years then.

Mr. Finch was the earliest and greatest pamphleteer of the party. Mr. Owen first introduced Mr. Finch to the co-operative public at his institution, in Charlotte Street, in 1834, as "a new labourer in the field." The "new labourer" actually got inserted in the *Liverpool Albion* a series of letters on the "Fooleries of Sectarianism." These "fooleries" were sincerities to those who entertained them, and they naturally resented this mode of describing them. But it is always your religious man who is most offensive to pious people. A man who dissents from the newspaper religions is respectful to them; and if he cares to oppose them, reasons against them without offensive imputation: but your religious man, who has a little infallibility of his own, can venture to commit outrages on others, knowing that his rudeness will pass for holy wrath.

In 1842, Mr. John Gray, of Faldonside, Galashiels, published "An Efficient Remedy for the Distress of Nations." Mr. Owen having set a fashion of devising "an entirely new system of society," Mr. Gray put forth one. Society profits in a silent, sulky way, by suggestions made to it: yet it dislikes any one who proposes to overhaul it. Mr. Gray had a great plan of a Standard Bank and Mint. The Duke of Wellington made known this year, in one of his wonderful notes, that "he declined to receive the visits of deputations from associations, or of individual gentlemen, in order to confer with them on public affairs; but if any gentleman thinks proper to give him, in writing, information or instruction, on any subject, he will peruse the same with attention." The modest, painstaking duke had not Mr. Gray before his eyes when he said this. That gentleman would have taken the duke at his word, and soon have brought him to a standstill. The pleasantest part of Mr. Gray's "Efficient Remedy" is where he tells the reader that he had published a previous work which had not sold, so that in issuing another he could only be actuated by a desire to advance the interests of mankind, and this was true. He

was a well-meaning, disinterested, and uninteresting writer. His books never sold, nor could they be given away; and there was for long a stock at two places in London where they could be had for the asking, and those who applied were looked upon with favour.

Those who have read much of the rise and career of new opinions will be aware that religious history would present a plentiful series of ridiculous situations and deplorable absurdities. And one reason why similar eccentricities are continually being reproduced in new movements is because party historians do not think it a duty to relate them. If they did, they would be warnings to ardent adherents to consider how they may best guard the truth they represent from misapprehension or dislike. It is true that many of the disciples of social science were flaccid, dreaming people, possessed of a feeble goodness; but there were also a larger number of strong, wise, cultivated, and determined adherents who sustained the movement when only men of courage would espouse it.

Eccentricities are not confined to any party; but when a party becomes established, vagaries are set down to the conduct of irresponsible individuals, by whom nobody is bound; but in the case of an unpopular association every act of folly is considered as its natural outcome.

Of the accredited representatives of Socialism who put S.M. after their names, the first in order of editorial service is Mr. George Alexander Fleming, who was the chief editor of the official journal of the party. Mr. Fleming was a native or Scotland, a man of considerable energy and maturity of self-acquired talent. He wrote as well as he spoke. He was the first in office, and he kept there. He was under no delusions of fervour, as others were liable to be. His talent lay in making the movement safe rather than great, and certainly there was room for his order of skill. He was afterwards connected with journals immediately under his own management, always consistently giving effect to the principles he early entertained. He died in the service of the *Morning Advertiser*.

Mr. Lloyd Jones, who ought to be named next in order of platform distinction, had the repute of having the best voice of any of the social lecturers, and that readiness of speech which

seems the common endowment of Irishmen. He was always regarded as the best debater who appeared on the platform; and if it was possible to perfect that talent by practice, he certainly had the opportunity, for more discussion fell to his lot than to any other of his compeers. To Mr. Jones belongs the distinction of being the most active to defend social views when its adherents were weakest, and to meet more of the enemy when the enemy were strongest than any other missionary. While he was a Manchester district missionary he had continually to be despatched to meet furious adversaries, or furious audiences. After a venomous tirade was delivered, he would present himself to answer it, when it was matter or common experience that the confident adversary, who had gone up like a rocket in his lecture, came down like a stick in the discussion. Mr. Jones joined the Salford Co-operative Society as early as 1829, and was all his days an influential leader of the movement.

Mr. James Rigby was one of the earliest, merriest, and pleasantest speakers among the missionaries. His vivacity of illustration was remarkable. He had genuine imagination; not, perhaps, always well in hand. If he did not obscure the facts by the fecundity of his fancy, he cast such a glamour over them that the hearer forgot to look for them. As an expositor of Socialism, he was the most fascinating of all his compeers. His vivacity, his graphic language, his brightness of imagination, his agreeable garrulity, always made him a popular speaker. He was long remembered for his happiness of expressing the immense hopes and prospects of the party without any sense whatever of the limited means which alone were at the command of social reformers to realise them. He first came into notice from the active part he took in the laborious agitation for the Ten Hours' Bill. After the fall of Queenwood, he was associated with Mr. Owen as a personal attendant, having charge of his manuscripts. He was entirely a communist, echoing literally Mr. Owen's material views on that subject; but when a semi-spiritualism came in after-days to be engrafted upon them by the master, Mr. Rigby proved that, though he was a disciple, he was not a follower in the sense of departing from the ancient way. He was with us when we buried Mr. Owen at Newtown. Among all who stood at that grave, none

were so assiduous, so faithful, so wary, as he. When I went down to relieve him late at night, as he kept watch over his master's tomb, it was with difficulty that he could be induced to go home, until I satisfied him that certain fears which he entertained were all anticipated, and that no unauthorised hands could disturb those honoured remains. His faithful fears dated as far back as the days of Julian Hibbert, at whose death Mr. Baume interfered by virtue of some personal warrant which he was understood to hold, and his head was preserved for purposes of science. All his life Mr. Rigby remained constant to the abstemious habits of his youth, and died at fifty-six years of age, without having tasted animal food. Up to the day of his burial no change from life was observable in his pleasant and placid countenance. Since I have often doubted whether he was really dead when I made an oration over his coffin.

The missionary who excelled all in vigour of speech, in wit, boldness, and dramatic talent, was Charles Southwell, or London, the youngest of thirty-six children, with activity enough on the platform for them all.

The Bishop of Norwich, Dr. Bathurst, was the youngest of thirty-six brothers and sisters.[1] So there was nothing heretical on Mr. Southwell's part in this peculiarity, for which, otherwise, he might have been held accountable. He was more brilliant than relevant. On one occasion he volunteered a lecture on behalf of imprisoned colleagues, from which myself, Maltus Questell Ryall, and William Chilton expected that some aid would arise. A good audience was assembled at the City Road Hall of Science, the same that Mr. Mordan provided for Detrosier. After Southwell had spoken three-quarters of an hour it was remarked by us that he had not arrived at his subject. Half an hour later he concluded amid a storm of applause, when we said to him, "Why, Southwell, you never mentioned your subject." No," he added, "it did not occur to me." And, to do him justice, neither did it occur to his audience till next day, so much had he diverted and entertained them.

Ultimately Mr. Southwell left England, and settled in New Zealand, a singularly unsuitable retreat for so fiery and

[1] *Norwich Mercury*, 1837.

active a spirit, unless he intended to set up as a chieftain. On the stage, on the platform, or in the secular press, he might have found a congenial sphere; but nothing fell to him available except the editorship of a Wesleyan newspaper. It must have been a livelier publication in his hands than its readers had known it before. Its orthodox articles must have been written by proxy. When death befel him, as it did after a few years' sojourn there, he was waited on by members of the proprietary whom he served, to offer him the religious consolations available to that body, and were surprised to be told by their patient that he had edited their paper because no other employment was open to him, but he never undertook to edit their tenets. He, however, preferred to die in his own principles, which were atheistic. He probably never professed to be a Wesleyan, and they took his silence for concurrence.

Frederick Hollick was a young Birmingham man, who cast his lot with the social movement in 1837–8. He and the present writer were townsmen, each engaged in mechanical industry, were fellow-students in the same Mechanics' Institution, both became speakers in the same movement, and were nearly of the same name. But to Mr. Hollick belonged the palm of seeing more things at once, seeing them soon, seeing them clearly, and stating them with a lucidity beyond any compeer of the social platform. When the missionaries were dispersed he went to America, where he studied dentistry and medicine, and published many works on physiology, and acquired both fortune and reputation; sixty years of absence have not diminished the regard in which he was held in England.

Thomas Simmons Mackintosh was a Socialist lecturer of note and popularity. He was a man of considerable scientific reading, and published a book entitled the "Electrical Theory of the Universe," which attracted attention. The simplicity and boldness of his theory seemed true to those who did not understand it, or who did not possess that reach of knowledge necessary to verify so vast a theory. It certainly showed originality and great capacity in focussing the limited electrical knowledge which then existed. Mr. Mackintosh was a ready and animated speaker, with a faculty for vivid and humorous scientific illustration. He ultimately perished in Ottawa, being drowned while bathing in the river in the cold season.

Mr. Alexander Campbell was an earnest, pacific advocate. He was, as most of the co-operative missionaries were, early connected with trade unions. He shared the mystic doctrines of "Being" of Mr. Greaves, and was one of the vegetarians of the Concordium at Ham Common. He trusted himself among the White Quakers. Mr. Campbell is remembered as one of the managers of the Orbiston community; one of his daughters married Mr. William Love, known as the chief Liberal bookseller of Glasgow. Mr. Campbell discovered the principle of distributing profits in stores in proportion to purchasers as early as 1829; which was acted upon in some stores in Scotland. The principle was re-discovered fifteen years later in Rochdale by James Howarth. Mr. Campbell was many years connected with the *Glasgow Sentinel*, a paper established by Robert Buchanan, the social missionary. An excellent three-quarter portrait, in oil, of Mr. Campbell hangs in the hall of the Secular Society, Glasgow, where he was a valued speaker.

Coventry furnished two missionaries, Dr. John Watts and Mr. John Colier Farn. Dr. Watts became distinguished for high character and practicable ability. When two of the editors of the *Oracle of Reason* were in prison, he conducted a publication of an alarming name.[1] The repeal of the taxes upon knowledge was accelerated by the lucid and powerful speeches he made in London and elsewhere upon the economical folly of those imposts. In Manchester he received a valuable testimonial in acknowledgment of political and educational services. Of the Economy of Co-operation he was an original and very suggestive expositor.

Mr. Farn was known as an animated lecturer, familiar alike with co-operative, trades-union, and political questions. He was subsequently connected with newspaper journalism, and at one time held the position of editor of the *Co-operative News*. He continued all his life the same ardent and zealous worker on behalf of the principles which first brought him into distinction.

One of the pleasantest advocates of early Co-operation was Henry Jacques Jeffery, a bright, quick-speaking, energetic

[1] *The Blasphemer*. There was no blasphemy in it. The title was in defiance of the Bishop of Exeter.

lecturer, distinguished for ardour and variety of exposition. He made generous exertions for the defence of his colleagues who incurred imprisonment. Mr. Jeffery was equally known in Edinburgh and London for the fervour with which he espoused social principles. He long held a place of considerable trust in one of the greatest publishing houses in London.

John Green was one of the early lecturers, some time stationed at Liverpool. He was a useful advocate, and took an honest interest in the movement. My recollection of him is very distinct. When a very young man, I had been wandering on foot for purposes of health for some three weeks, and embarking at Liverpool for a short voyage, which, as I had never seen the sea, seemed an immense adventure, a pleasant, homely voice called out to me from the quay, "Mr. Holyoake, Mr. Holyoake." As I had not heard my name for three weeks, I felt like Robinson Crusoe, when he was first addressed by his parrot, and thought so at the time. I was grateful to Mr. Green for that greeting. He afterwards went to America, where, before he had acquired the faculty of seeing two ways at once, necessary in that land, he was cut into halves by a railway train. He held some official position upon the line.

Robert Buchanan was another Scotch advocate who joined the missionary propaganda of 1837. An ardent and ready speaker, he was also addicted to poetry, in which he succeeded better than any of the competitors in verse by whom he was surrounded. After the social movement subsided, Mr. Buchanan became connected with journalism, both in Glasgow and London, until his death a few years ago. His son, Robert Buchanan, had far more than his father's genius, and was a poet, a novelist, and dramatist of accredited reputation.

Another poet who made some noise, and obtained considerable notice among those for whom he sang, was John Garwood, whose protracted performance, "The Force of Circumstances," appeared in many numbers of the weekly publications of the party.

Eben Jones was a young poet, who made several contributions to the *New Moral World*. He really could write readable verses. His poems being, like Shelley's, heretical, contributed strongly to impart that character to the party publishing them, without distinguishing them as unofficial contributions.

One speaker, a man of real capacity, was a tailor, named Robert Spiers. In social condition he, too, was a person to whom any form of the millennium would have been welcome. I first met him at the opening of the Social Institution in Huddersfield, at which I was to speak morning and evening; but when I saw my name in large letters, rainbow-coloured, on the walls of the town, I was dazed and abashed, and did not make much of the speaking, except for one ten minutes in the evening, when I forgot the placard. I had walked from Sheffield, twenty-six miles, the preceding day, which did not conduce to energy of speech or imagination. But I well remember that Mr. Spiers, who spoke in the afternoon, he being regarded as a secondary person to the luminary who was imported to speak in the morning and evening, amazed me by the mastery of statement which he displayed. In capacity or logical, not merely subtlety of, sequence, but of obvious dependence of one part on the other, and all the parts leaving one whole impression upon the mind, I still think him the ablest lecturer we had.

Napier Bailey was a strange figure, who flitted across the social platform. He had been a Lancashire schoolmaster, and he always remained a schoolmaster. He had not a particle of imagination, but possessed more literary information than any other of his platform colleagues. He was the first and only contributor to the *New Moral World* who quoted Greek. It would be a fortunate thing if everybody who knew Greek and Latin could be allowed to wear some intimation of the fact upon them, that the general public might honour them accordingly without being obliged to recognise the acquirement by quotations which, being assumed to be highly rare and interesting, are therefore presented to ordinary readers in a language they do not understand. Mr. Bailey's article must have been delayed a fortnight while the printer, in a Midland town, where Greek is not the language of the inhabitants, sent to London for the necessary type. Mr. Bailey was an active writer, and communicated a great deal of interesting information to all who read or heard him. As he had far more literary knowledge than the majority of opponents in his time, he silenced more adversaries than any other lecturer by overwhelming them with quotations which they could not answer, because

they could not understand them. Mr. Bailey was the writer of the "Social Reformers' Cabinet Library." He passed away suddenly from the view of men, and has never been heard or since.

G. Simkins, whose name frequently occurs in early reports of the Charlotte Street Institution, was a shoemaker by trade; a tall, pale, spare-looking man, who looked as if the old world had not done much for him. Like some other lecturers of that time, he took the principles pretty much as he found them; but if he did not make them plainer he did not obscure them, nor compromise them by extravagance of statement.

Henry Knight was another young speaker, who after a few years of activity went to America. He wrote a series of short letters in explanation of the principles he represented as a missionary, which were by far the freshest and most interesting statement of them produced by any advocate of the time. His papers appeared under the title of "Short Essays on Socialism." Though a very young man, he had the merit of being the first lecturer who attempted to select from the collection of principles set forth by Mr. Owen, those which were essential to the community scheme.

J. R. Cooper, an active newsagent and bookseller of Manchester, was favourably known as a lecturer on social questions. His younger brother, Robert Cooper, became a Social Missionary. He (Robert Cooper) wrote several pamphlets, chiefly on theological subjects, which had a considerable sale. In later years he came into possession of a fortune which was intended for Mr. Southwell, to whom it was first bequeathed. But on his leaving for New Zealand, Mr. Fletcher, in his disappointment, bequeathed it to the present writer, who was Mr. Southwell's coadjutor on the *Oracle of Reason*, who held Mr. Fletcher's will two years. Acting on treacherous information, which Mr. Fletcher did not know to be untrue, he altered the will in favour of Mr. Cooper, and, dying suddenly, Mr. Cooper inherited it. The giver honourably remembered Mrs. Emma Martin's children by a small legacy to each.

One of the writers who contributed most to the pleasant information and poetic amusement of the *New Moral World*, was a gentleman who signed himself "Pencil'em," with a knowledge of, and a taste for, art and literature. His verses had

a pleasant sparkle of wit and humour, which often relieved the perennial disquisitions upon the Five Fundamental Facts, and Twenty Laws of Human Nature. Some who have acquired distinction have owed the inspiration and practice of art to him. He held an official situation at South Kensington, in which his attainments were beneficial to the nation.[1]

Mrs. Wheeler attracted considerable attention by well-reasoned lectures, delivered in 1829, in a chapel near Finsbury Square.

Miss Reynolds was another lady lecturer who excited great admiration for her effective speaking. She afterwards became Mrs. Chapel Smith, went to America, and is understood to be the same lady who frequently wrote to the *Boston Investigator*, and whose letters are dated from New Harmony, Indiana.

Among the new writers of 1835 appears one under the signature of "Kate," afterwards the wife of Mr. Goodwyn Barmby. "Kate's" papers were always fresh, pleasant, and sensible.

In 1841, Mary Hennell wrote an interesting "Outline of the various Social Systems and Communities which have been founded on the principle of Co-operation." It appeared as an appendix to Charles Bray's "Philosophy of Necessity." Sara Hennell, her sister, has written many works of considerable originality and literary completeness.

Madame D'Arusmont was the most accomplished and distinguished woman, who personally identified herself with the propagation of social views. As Frances Wright, her lectures were popular both in England and America. She was known as the friend and associate of General Lafayette, and in the days of slavery she bought lands and endeavoured to establish a free negro community at Nashoba. She had a commanding presence, and was a cultivated and eloquent lecturess in days when only women of great courage ventured to lecture at all. She is reported as declaring, in 1836, in favour of the immediate abolition of Southern slavery. This occurred at Tammany Hall. Mr. J. S. Mill held her in regard as one of the most

[1] Mr. George Wallas ("Pencil'em") was an artist in Bilston. As a Social Missionary it was my duty to examine all persons joining a branch. I remember passing Mr. Wallas, about 1841, who probably knew more of most things than I did myself. My brother William, who became Curator of the Art Schools of the Royal Academy, and a painter of repute in his day, owed his art education to Mr. Wallas.

important women of her day, and pointed this out to the present writer on her last visit to England.[1]

Notable among the ladies who have been social lecturers was Mrs. Emma Martin, who had wit and the courage of several men, and delivered lectures in the stormiest times and to the most dangerously disposed audiences. She was a small lady, of attractive expression, with dark luminous eyes, a pleasant, far-reaching voice, and a womanly woman. The vivacious "Vivian," of the *Leader*, whom the public now know as G. H. Lewes, with various admiration under his own name, used to say that he disliked "bony priestesses, learned in all the ologies and destitute of hips." Co-operators have not been wanting in beautiful advocates; but they remembered that wise men were not always beautiful, and they esteemed greatly a pleasant mind. Mrs. Martin studied medicine and practised with success, and during the cholera of 1849 displayed great courage, as she did in everything.

Among the well-known pioneers of the earlier period was E. T. Craig, mentioned for the intrepidity shown by him at Ralahine. The following letter from Lady Noel Byron to him serves to explain the diversified nature of the social work done in those days, and the respect in which Mr. Craig was held by eminent persons. The honourable and practical interest Lady Byron took in promoting the betterment of the humbler classes led her to give him the direction of an industrial agricultural school, which she founded at Ealing Grove, on land formerly belonging to the Duke of Newcastle. Her ladyship's letter was as follows:—

"Sir,—I had the satisfaction of receiving your letter yesterday. After Mr. Finch had informed me of the possibility of obtaining your valuable assistance I addressed you on the subject, directing my letter to Mr. Barry's residence (Glandore, Ireland), where you were supposed to be. I am, however, glad to find that you are not so far distant, and if you feel disposed to enter into the scheme, of which I send you the prospectus, I shall be happy to defray the expenses of your journey from Manchester, in order that you may communicate with the gentlemen who are engaged in the undertaking. I do not con-

[1] Her famous career as a foundress of a community was described by Mrs. Trollope in 1829. See *Co-operative News*, July 30, 1904.

sider myself as having a right to settle anything individually, as I am only one of the parties concerned, and have not the knowledge requisite to direct the arrangements of such an institution. It has, however, been my advice that the master should be found *before* the land was bought or rented (for that point is not decided), and before any of the economical details were finally determined upon ; because I thought that the person chosen to conduct the establishment would be the best adviser on such questions. The locality will be within eight miles of London. The amount of funds not yet ascertained. You will therefore perceive that there is not at present an absolute certainty of the *whole* of the above plan being carried into effect ; but there can scarcely be a doubt that the day-school, with land attached to it, might be speedily established if a competent director were found.

"I am strongly impressed with the belief of your possessing the energy, experience, and benevolence necessary to execute our design. The remuneration to be afforded you must depend in part on the success and extension of the school. You will be enabled to form your own judgment if you take the trouble to come to London. I could see you either there or here, and will refer you in the first place to a friend of mine, who feels great interest in the agricultural school plan."

Mr. Craig accepted the appointment from Lady Byron, and while the buildings were being prepared he went on a commission to the Continent to examine the industrial schools of Rotterdam, and of Switzerland, including the famous one of E. de Fellenburg, at Hofwyl, near Berne. Lady Byron's school, which he organised at Ealing Grove, on the plan pursued at Ralahine, obtained considerable distinction, and was much visited. The Duchess of Roxburgh, the Lady Lytton Bulwer, Ada Byron, Lord King, Sir William Molesworth, and Mrs. Somerville were among those who came.

In the course of this narrative it will necessarily happen that many persons will be omitted who really are entitled to a place in it. A difficulty which besets every writer is, that whatever trouble he takes to be well informed, he will not escape giving evidence that he does not know everything. My care has been to include all those whose services were most obvious and influential in the movement.

Many will remember the familiar names of Mr. Vines and

Mr. Atkinson, who promoted associated homes, as they did in earlier years; Mr. Alger and Mr. Braby, long actively connected with the movement; Walter Newall, long held in regard as one of the general secretaries of the central board; Mr. Nash, a familiar name to the friends of Labour Exchanges; Mr. Ardell, one time treasurer in community days; Lawrence Pitkeithly, of Huddersfield, alike regarded by Chartists and Socialists; H. Constable, an earlier and later friend of the old cause; J. Cross, of Shoreditch, who lost two fortunes in his later years, and gallantly earned a third, and equally, rich or poor, worked for the promotion of social ideas; Mr. Austin, who, like Philip O. Skene, wore himself out with his enthusiasm; Robert Adair, whom the poet Wordsworth selected to give the first appointment he bestowed, when he became Her Majesty's Distributor of Stamps. Many others in the chief towns of England and Scotland might, if space permitted, be named for services by which this generation is benefited, and for which they obtained no requital.

Several of the missionaries were remarkable instances of monotony of power. As young men they manifested sudden and unusual ability. They "struck twelve all at once," and never struck anything after. They were a sort of petrified publicists. Some of these social apostles were pleasant persons to know, but a few of the most endurable were the least worthy, inasmuch as they gave thought and talent to their cause, but did not consider how far they could advance it by giving it also the tribute of their conduct. They did not consider that their credit and connections belonged to it.

Others adorned their principles by their career; they took, as it were, the weight of the disordered world upon their shoulders. I remember one, and he was an outlying propagandist, who had the martyr-spirit without the martyr-manner. Like Talleyrand, he waited for the hour of action, and never acted before it came. He knew that things were going round, and he watched until the turn came for him to do his part, and he did it with the full force those only can exert who have reserved their strength for the blow. He was thin, poor, and seedy; but even his seediness had a certain charm of taste, cleanness, and care. There was no seediness in his soul. His spirits were always bright.

The majority of these social advocates had clear, strong, worldly sense. Their principles and conduct refuted everything which the world commonly alleged against communists. They were innovators without hatred, advocating change without bitterness or selfishness.

Mr. Fleming challenged Richard Carlile to discussion; Lloyd Jones also met him. Mr. Green challenged a Mr. Halliwell, of Oldham. Mr. Haslam "challenged all the ministers of the Gospel in the country," and other missionaries challenged everybody else who had been omitted. Mr. Booth has collected statistics of the propagandist activity of this party from 1839 to 1841. In two years and a half two millions of tracts were circulated. At Manchester one thousand were distributed at public meetings every Sunday. In London 40,000 were given away in one year. During the Birmingham Congress half a million were dispersed. Fifty thousand copies of Mr. Owen's manifesto in reply to the Bishop of Exeter were sold. The outline of the rational system was translated into German, Polish, and Welsh. At one meeting £50 was received for the sale of pamphlets. During one year fifty formal discussions were held with the clergy. During another 1,450 lectures were delivered, of which 604 were upon theology and ethics. Three hundred and fifty towns were regularly visited by missionaries, and the country was divided into fourteen missionary districts. This was genuine propagandist activity and intrepidity. If collision of thought leads to enlightenment, the co-operators certainly promoted it. Every hall in the kingdom that could be hired resounded with debate; the corner of every street had its group of disputants; every green and open place where speakers could hold forth was noisy with controversy; no fireside was silent; pulpits were animated; the press abounded with articles; Unitarians in those days were less Evangelical than now and mercifully helpful of secular improvement, and at all times more liberal than any other English sect, often opening their chapels and schoolrooms to lectures and even discussions. Often social lectures had to be delivered in the streets, in the market-place, and often in a field belonging to some fearless friend of free opinion in the town. Though most of the social reformers were total abstainers, they had to occupy rooms in public-houses. Respectable innkeepers

were afraid of the licensing magistrates, who commonly threatened them with the loss of their license. The leading advocates of temperance had often to go down obscure, miserable passages, jostling against beery people frequenting the house.

Theologians would accept an act of liberality from others, but would not show it in return. When the Rev. Edward Irving and his followers were deprived of their own church, they were admitted into the Gray's Inn Institution; but when the co-operators wanted to hold a meeting only in the school-room of the Rev. J. Innes, of Camberwell, a minister of the same church, they were refused it. It was frequently the lot of the social advocates to find themselves in the streets; sometimes they met in an old barn, or a back room, lying far down a mysterious court, where the audience could ill find their way, and had often more trouble to get out than get in. Persons were often sent to break up the meeting by violence, and attack the speakers outside on leaving the place. The ascent to the lecture-room was often up a rickety ladder, with a penny candle outside, which was always blowing out, to indicate to the public the Hole in the Wall, through which they were to enter. Inside, two or three miserable candles, stuck up among the rafters with soft clay, shed flickering and precarious light over the interior. The lecturer (on the subject of the New World) had to stand upon an old table, which, when he mounted it, was discovered to have but three legs, which was generally propped up by some enthusiastic disciple, who put his knee under it; but when he was carried away by some point which his friend on the table made successfully, he joined in the applause, which altered his position, and let the orator down. In some towns a desolate theatre was the only place that could be obtained, and it was sometimes necessary, as in Whitehaven, when the present writer lectured there, to fortify it the day before the lecture, and to select, as a sort of body-guard, those converts to the new views who had the thickest heads, in the event of bludgeons being employed; as the audience threatened to assemble with stones in their pockets, I left my friends in the wings, and presented myself on the platform alone, judging that only good marksmen would be able to hit a single target. Mr. Owen, Alexander Campbell, and other lecturers incurred

far more serious danger. Sometimes the lecture-room was situated, as in Leeds, over a series of butchers' shops, which in summer-time gave a carnivorous odour to the principles promulgated above. It was a common thing to find the place of meeting over a stable, when a stranger entering would be struck by the flavour of the principles before hearing them explained.

Two movements of great hope failed through very opposite conduct—the associative colonies and the mechanics' institutions. The co-operators opened their doors to all sorts of discussion, and the mechanics' institutions closed theirs against any.

As social speakers welcomed all comers, they had to encounter a strange assortment of adversaries. Now and then a fat disputant appeared, and very welcome his presence was. We never had a large speaker among our advocates, which was a great disadvantage. It would have suggested a well-fed system. Obesity has weight in more senses than one. A fat look is imposing. A mere self-confident turn of a rotund head has the effect of an argument. An attenuated visage always seems illogical to the multitude, while a mellow voice rolls over an audience like a conclusive sequence.

The early advocates, like many others, who have done the world some service, and made a lasting name in it, were better inspired than informed. Many of them had no more notion than Jesus had of political economy, or the Apostles had of the manufacturing system, and often talked beside the time and needs of the day. It was, nevertheless, freely owned that the missionary representatives of Mr. Owen's views not only held their own, but made important captures from the enemy. Mr. Owen himself, when he had relinquished public life, continued the most untiring travelling advocate of the time; and his addresses were undoubtedly successful, and excited both interest and enthusiasm wherever he appeared. When adversaries appeared after his lectures, he always proved equal to returning a prompt and effective reply. For instance, when lecturing in Edinburgh in 1838, one of the acute opponents, always to be met with in that city, derided Mr. Owen's statement, that human beings could be trained to believe anything ever so absurd and contradictory. "Is it possible," demanded a sharp-tongued querist, "to train

an individual to believe that two and two make five?" "We need not, I think," said Mr. Owen, "go far for an answer. I think all of us know many persons who are trained to believe that three make one, and think very ill of you if you differ from them." This was a good instance of his repartee. The answer seemed most obvious when it was made, but it occurred to nobody till it was given.

It was no uncommon thing for an adverse hearer to be wantonly offensive, and plead that "he was the creature of circumstances over which he had no control," when a vigorous adherent of ready wit would reply—"That's very true, we are all in the same case, and your behaviour is a circumstance which compels me to knock you down"—and in a moment the adversary would be reflecting on the floor. Anon a disputant shot like a meteor over the darkness of debate. Some men's thoughts are like matches, they ignite by the mere attrition of sentences, and throw light on the dim places of an argument. Other men's never ignite at all. Some have fusee ideas, and smoulder merely. Others have tar minds, and give out more odour and smoke than flame. Now and then a man would get up and strike his arguments together like the old flint and tinder box, producing more noise than sparks. Occasionally a speaker burnt with a strong, steady, flame of speech, which both lighted and warmed every one, and the hearer saw clearer ever after. There are hearers with indiarubber minds, which stretch with a discourse. Some understandings are like porcelain, and crack if you hit them with a hard syllogism—and the parts never unite any more. There are speakers whose influence, if not their intellect, is in their throats, and their wild, strong, musical cadences charm the ear. They who listen do not well know what they have said, and speakers do not know themselves, and do not need to know. Their speech is applauded like a song, of which no one knows the words. Others speak like a railway whistle, and impart knowledge and the headache together. The scatter-brained men would come forward in force, and some with no brains at all. Not infrequently a disputant did not know what the point was he was replying to; or if he did, his speech, like Mrs. Gamp's, went elsewhere, and not there. We had all sorts of opponents, lay and

clerical. Some would swell the truth until the audience thought there was something the matter with it; others thinned it until it seemed in a decline, while the rough-handed dislocated it and made it appear out of joint.

Many people are inclined to take a poetic view of life: and so long as they keep their feet upon the earth they are the most agreeable persons to know. Their innovatory vivacity renders progress brilliant. When, however, they leave the earth it is not worth while looking up in the air after them. There is nothing to gain until they alight. There used to be whole meetings in which there were no persons on the ground, they were all up above. A man thoroughly sane is a very interesting person. He stands firm upon the earth, and you know where to find him. He sees things as they are, and the people who do that are rare. They are the spectacles of their friends, enabling the dim or dazed to look discerningly and steadily at what is before them. A wise man consults the sane seeing man as he would a telescope, when he wishes to make out the danger appearing in the uncertain distance.

It is one of the lessons of party experience to perceive that the loftiest precepts have but limited force, as a rule hearers need to be educated to receive them. Only partial results ought to have been expected until this was done, whereas no doubt was entertained of the immediate and permanent effect of right principles. It was thought that reason would operate at once, and for ever influence the mind which apprehended it. It was not foreseen that only very powerful minds act on principles from energy of personal insight. New opinion is a burden which few men continue to carry unless they are instructed in all its advantages as well as disadvantages, and enter upon the duty with their eyes fully open to what will follow, then hostility gives them no surprise. In the enthusiastic period of a movement principles are masters of the advocates, instead of the advocates being masters of the principles. It was debate, and debate alone, that taught co-operators this lesson; and where they have learned it Co-operation advances.

Off-hand advocates trusted to a sort of Wesleyan readiness and impulse, and accomplished what they did more by fervour than by art. On the canvas on which they worked they put

in some figures of great force, but they executed no finished picture of power. Cabet, who succeeded Mr. Owen in order of time, was an equable, but mild, delineator of social life; he was the most practical and coherent of French world-makers. Nothing was produced in the literature of English Socialism comparable to the writings of Louis Blanc.

At times learned lecturers appeared among us. Some were lawyers, who endowed the new system with attributes of categorical profundity, which held us all in amazement. There was, in what they said, a protracted coherence, an illimitable lucidity, which compelled ordinary hearers to fall out of the line of proof on the way, exhausted, and enthusiastic.

No one continues a propagandist unless he be a person of courage, industry, and self-denial. In the case of new thought most people do not like to think at all; others, who have no minds to think with, are still more difficult to deal with. You cannot convert vacuity; and you have to create mind by teaching the very elementary principles of thinking.

If a man's mind moves on some hinge of prejudice, you have to provide that it turns on some pivot of principle. In Co-operation new objects, new feelings, new habits had to be proposed. Men had to be shown that their welfare and security were best attained by an arrangement of business, which gave fair advantages to others.

A propagandist is an agent of ideas, a cause of change, a precursor of progress. To do his work well, he must have some mastery of his own language, for grammar is merely the law of intelligible speech. He must know how to set his facts in the order in which they can be seen as he sees them; and able to reason upon his facts, when he has set them forth, else their purport can never be enforced. The practical effect of grammar is economy in speech; the practical effect of logic is economy in thinking. The propagandist has to remember that his life is an argument. A man may give good advice who never follows it, as a finger-post may point the right way though it never moves in that direction. But he who is seen to do himself what he counsels, will always have more influence over men than those who say one thing and do another. There is a sin of consistency when a man professes opinions after he sees their error, not liking to own

his altered convictions. But consistency between conviction and conduct is a very different thing. Inconsistency between belief and practice is hypocrisy, whether before man or God. He who urges others to be true, should be true himself. Hence he must be at the service of the principles he proposes to advance. The Italian proverb says, thoughtfully, "Beware of being too good." There seems that no harm could come of that. When a man acts disinterestedly among others who do not, they will disbelieve him, for none believe heartily in what they do not feel capable of themselves; and these persons, finding the conduct of others a reproach to themselves, descry it. A propagandist must take this as he takes other risks, and do the best he can. He will be believed in the end if he keeps doing the right thing to the best of his power. So that a propagandist should either incur no family obligations like Mazzini, or count upon the pain of involving them in consequences of his own convictions, which they may not share, and yet will have to bear the penalty, and he be helpless to prevent it. The wife and children may be nobly willing to share any consequences which may result through the father maintaining his convictions, and count the bearing of an honest name an honourable inheritance. But these cases are not common. Privation, the consequence of social exclusion, comes in so many ways that, however bravely borne, it must be painful to the propagandist to contemplate. He who chooses to embark in the service of mankind must make up his mind to this; and he had better know it from the beginning. There may come regard and honour, before which all days of peril and labour pale in the memory; but these are happy accidents on which no man may count.

The reader can now form his own opinion of the school of Social Improvers, whose careers and fortunes we have now followed through the Pioneer Period. They fought not for their own hand, but for the hand of the people. They taught the new doctrine of self-help and industrial emancipation. Milton, who had a militant spirit, who could not think of heaven without thinking of the fighting there, whose spirit strode the earth in stormy times, understood better than most men, as he wrote—

> "Peace hath her victories,
> Not less renowned than those of war."

And this is the victory the Social Pioneers won ; Louis Blanc, in his "Organisation of Labour," began with the impassioned cry, "Christ has come ; but when cometh salvation ?" It has been this long-promised, much-needed, long-delayed, material salvation, which these social propagandists have advanced.

CHAPTER XIII

FORGOTTEN WORKERS

"By my hearth I keep a sacred nook
For gnomes and dwarfs, duck-footed waddling elves
Who stitched and hammered for the weary man
In days of old. And in that piety
I clothe ungainly forms inherited
From toiling generations, daily bent
At desk, or plough, or loom, or in the mine,
In pioneering labours for the word."

GEORGE ELIOT, *A Minor Prophet.*

THE Pioneer Period in every great movement best displays the aims, the generosity of service, the impulse of passion, the mistakes of policy, the quality and force of character, of leaders and followers. Any one conversant with struggling movements knows that most of the errors which arose were due to the actors never having been told of the nature and responsibilities of their enterprise. Ten men err from pure ignorance where one errs from wilfulness or incapacity. How often I have heard others exclaim, how often have I exclaimed myself, when a foolish thing had been said, or a wrong thing had been done, why did not some one who had had this experience before tell us of this? Co-operators who master and hold fast openly, and always, to a policy of truth, toleration, relevance, and equity, succeed.

The unremembered workers described in the words of the poetess, placed at the head of this chapter, have abounded in the social movement. Less fortunate than the religious devotee, who sailed more or less with the popular current, the social innovator has few friends. Rulers distrusted him. His pursuit of secular good, caused him to be ill-spoken of by spiritual authorities, and he had no motive to inspire him save

the desire or doing good to others. Too much is not to be made of those who die in discharge of well-understood duty. In daily life numerous persons run risks of a like nature, and sometimes perish in the public service. To know how to estimate those who stand true we must take into sight those who never stand at all—who, the moment loss or peril is foreseen, crawl away like vermin into holes of security. These are the rabbit-minded reformers, who flee at the first sound of danger, or wait to see a thing succeed before they join it. Those who flee a struggling cause are a great army compared with those who fight.

Yet the world is not selfish or cold. It is like the aspects of Nature: large parts are sterile, bleak, inhospitable; yet, even there, the grandeur of view and majestic grimness delight the strong. In other parts of physical Nature—warmth, light, foliage, flowers, make glad and gay the imagination. So in society—strong, tender, wise men will give discriminating aid to strugglers below them; strugglers, indeed, perish unhelped, ofttimes because they are unnoticed, rather than because of the inhumanity of the prosperous. There are, as experience too well tells, men who do not want to help others; while there are more who do not help, simply not knowing how. But there are others, and it is honest to count them, whom affluence does not make insensible, and who feel for the poor.

The agitation had for leaders many disinterested gentlemen who not only meant what they said in sympathy, but were prepared to give, and did give, their fortunes to promote it. There was not a man of mark among them who expected to, or tried to, make money for himself by these projects of social improvement. Some, as Abram Combe and William Thompson, gave not only money but life. Others absolutely divested themselves of their fortunes in the cause. They indeed believed that they were founding a system of general competence, and that such share as was secured to others would accrue to them; and with this prospect they were content. Some of them might have retained stately homes and have commanded deference by the splendour of their lives. And when their disinterested dream was not realised, their fortune squandered, and disappointment, and even penury overtook them, as happened in some cases, they never regretted the part they had

taken, and died predicting that others would come after them, who, wiser and more fortunate than they, would attain to the success denied to them. Gentlemen connected with Co-operation were not wanting in the spirit of self-sacrifice, who died, like Mr. Cowell Stepney, of caring for everybody's interest but their own.[1] This is not at all a common disease in any class, and takes very few people off. Yet few are remembered with the reverence accorded to those who die these deaths. Were their services understood they would receive honour exceeding that of those greeted by—

> "The patched and plodding citizen,
> Waiting upon the pavement with the throng,
> While some victorious world-hero makes
> Triumphant entry; and the peal of shouts . . .
> Run like a storm of joy along the streets!
> He says, 'God bless him!' . . .
> As the great hero passes. . . .
> Perhaps the hero's deeds have helped to bring
> A time when every honest citizen
> Shall wear a coat unpatched."[2]

Ignoring certain noisy adherents, who infest every movement, whose policy is conspicuousness, and whose principle is "what they can get"; who seek only to serve themselves, never, except by accident, serving anybody else; who clutch at every advantage, without giving one grateful thought, or even respectful word, to those who have created the advantage they enjoy—my concern is not for these adherents, whose very souls are shabby, and who would bring salvation itself into discredit were it extended to them. My last care is for the honest, unobtrusive workers, who drudged, without ceasing, in the "cause"—who devoted the day of rest to correspondence with unknown inquirers. The just-minded took the services with gratitude; the selfish took them as their right, never asking at what cost it was accorded. Knowing that self-help meant self-thinking, and that no deliverance would come if the people left it to others to think for them—these advocates counted it a first duty to awaken in their fellows the inspira-

[1] Eldest son of Sir Cowell Stepney, who, until his death, attended all the co-operative and international congresses of working men wherever held in England or in Europe, and who corresponded with all the social reformers of the world, and sent them publications bearing upon the movement.

[2] "A Minor Prophet," by George Eliot.

tion of self-action. But in thus making themselves so far the Providence of others, the most generous of them had no time left to be a Providence to themselves. But it is not for us to forget the self-forgetting, whose convictions were obligations, and whose duty was determined by the needs of others. During the ninety years over which this history travels there have been humble compeers who drudged in stores during what hours fell to them after their day's work was done. They travelled from street to street, or from village to village, on Sundays, to collect the pence which started the stores. They gave more than they could afford to support periodicals, which never paid their conductors, for the chance of useful information thus reaching others. For themselves, they reaped in after-days dismay and disregard at their own fireside, for their disinterested and too ardent preference of others' interests. Many gave their nights to the needful, but monotonous duties of committees, and to speaking at meetings at which few attended, returning late and weary to cheerless rooms. Some were worn out prematurely, and died unattended in obscure lodgings. Some lingered out their uncheered days on the precarious aid occasionally sent them by those who happened to remember that they were benefiting by the peril which had brought the old propagandists low. Not a few of them, after speeches of fiery protest on behalf of independence, in political movements to which they were also attracted, spent months and years in the indignity of prison, and at last died on a poor-house bed, and were laid in a pauper's grave.[1] I have met

[1] One might give many instances. One is that of George White, of Bradford, who died in the poor-house in Sheffield. Had I known of his death at the time I would have asked Mr. Gathorne Hardy, who was then Home Secretary, for leave to remove his body and lay it by the side of Holberry, the Chartist, who died in prison and was buried with public honour in Sheffield. White was well known to Mr. Hardy's father, who had some respect for the vigorous and turbulent Irish Chartist. We were both in prison at the same time, and it was arranged that he who was out first, his wife should make pies and take to the other. As I was at liberty first, many savoury pies found their way to White's prison. I have no doubt he died dreaming that more pies were coming to him, for he died very desolate. For years, if danger threatened us in public meeting, George White brought up his Old Guards. On one occasion, when the great discussion in which the Birmingham Socialists were concerned, White's detachment of the Old Guards attended five nights, and, although poor men, paid for admission to the best places ; and when the final fray came the respectable pious belligerents in every part of Beardsworth's Repository found a strong-handed Chartist behind them, and the enemy found themselves outside the hall on their way home before they knew where

their names in struggling periodicals advocating social and political progress. Many of them were my comrades. Foreseeing their fate, I often tried to mitigate their devotion. I stood later by the dying bed of some of them, and spoke at the burial of many. They lie in unremembered graves. But there was inspiration in their career which has quickened the pulses of industry. Though the distant footfall of the coming triumph of their order never reached their ear, they believed not less in its march.

they were. George White gave the signal to the Old Guards from the platform, where he and his trusty colleagues did execution among the clerical rioters there, who, when the police were introduced, had all disappeared. Honour to the generous Old Guards, who stood up for fair play although they were not partisans of the doctrines in dispute!

PART II

THE CONSTRUCTIVE PERIOD

1845–1878

CHAPTER XIV

THE STORY OF A DEAD MOVEMENT

"A new mind is first infused into society; . . . is breathed from individual to individual, from family to family—it traverses districts—and new men, unknown to each other, arise in different parts. . . . At last a word is spoken which appeals to the hearts of all—each answers simultaneously to the call—a compact body is collected under one standard, a watchword is given, and every man knows his friend."—THE FIRST LORD LYTTON.

MOVEMENTS, like men, die—some a natural, some a violent, death. Some movements perish of intellectual rickets, from lack of vitality; or, falling into blind hands, never see their opportunities. It is true of movements as of men—those who act and do not think, and those who think and do not act—alike require an early coffin. In days of social storm, insurrection, revolution, every word of counsellors entitled to be heard has significance. Change is but a silent storm, ever beating, ever warning men to provide for it, and they who stand still are swept away. But movements do not often die in their beds—they are assassinated in the streets. Error, fed upon ignorance, and inspired by spite, is commonly strong and unscrupulous. Truth must fight to live. There is no marching on without going forward and confronting the enemy. Those who know the country and are resolute, may occupy more of it than they foresee. It is a delusion to think that pioneers have all the ground to clear. Men's heads are mostly vacant, and not a few are entirely empty. In more cases than are imagined there is a brain-hunger for ideas. Co-operation, after thirty years of valorous vicissitude, died, or seemed to die, in 1844–5.

The busy, aspiring movement of Co-operation, so long chequered by ardour and despondency, was rapidly subsiding

into silence and decay. The little armies on the once militant plain had been one after another defeated and disbanded. The standards, which had been carried defiantly with some daring acclaim, had fallen one by one; and in many cases the standard-bearers had fallen with them. For a few years to come no movement is anywhere observable. Hardly a solitary insurgent is discernible in any part of the once animated horizon. The sun of industrial hope, which kept so many towns aglow, has now gone down. The very air is bleak. The *Northern Star*,[1] lurid and glaring (which arose in Leeds, to guide the Political Pioneers of Lancashire and Yorkshire), is becoming dim. The *Star in the East* promising to indicate that among the managers of Wisbech a new deliverer[2] has come, has dropped out of the firmament. The hum of the *Working Bee* is no more heard in the fens of Cambridgeshire. The *Morning Star*—that appeared at Ham Common, shining upon a dietary of vegetables and milk—has fallen out of sight.[3] "Journals" are kept no more—"Calendars" no longer have dates filled in—"Co-operative Miscellanies" have ceased—"Mirrors" fail to reflect the faces of the Pioneers—*The Radical* has torn up its roots—*The Commonweal* has no one to care for it—believers in the *New Age* are extinct—*The Shepherd* is gathering his eccentric flocks into a new fold[4]—readers of the *Associate* have discontinued to assemble together—"Monthly Magazines" forget to come out—"Gazettes" are empty—"Heralds" no more go forth—"Beacons" find that the day of warning is over—the *Pioneer* has fallen in the last expedition of the forlorn hope which he led—there is nothing further to "Register," and the *New Moral World* is about to be sold by auction—Samuel Bower has eaten all his peas—Mr. Etzler has carried his wondrous machines of Paradise to Venezuela—Joseph Smith has replaced his wig—Mr. Baume has sold his monkey—and the Frenchman's Island, where infants were to be suckled by machinery, has not

[1] Of Feargus O'Connor.

[2] Edited by Mr. James Hill, related by marriage to Dr. Southwood Smith.

[3] This was many years before the appearance of the London *Morning Star* newspaper, which was never so much appreciated as when it was missed.

[4] The *Family Herald*.

inappropriately become the site of the Pentonville Penitentiary. The "Association of All Classes of All Nations" has not a member left upon its books. Of the seventy thousand Chartist land-dreamers, who had been actually enrolled, nothing is to remain in the public mind save the memory of Snigg's End! Labour Exchanges have become bywords—the Indiana community is as silent as the waters of the Wabash by its side—Orbiston is buried in the grave of Abram Combe—Ralahine has been gambled away—the Concordia is a strawberry garden—Manea Fen has sunk out of sight—the President of Queenwood is encamping in the lanes—the blasts of the "Heralds of Community" have died in the air—the notes of the "Trumpet Calls" have long been still, and the trumpeters themselves are dead. It may be said, as the Lord of the Manor of Rochdale [1] wrote of a more historic desolation :—

> "The tents are all silent, the banners alone,
> The lances unlifted, the trumpets unblown."

Time, defamation, losses, distrust, dismay, appear to have done their work. Never human movement seemed so very dead as this of Co-operation. Its lands were all sold, its script had no more value, its orators no more hearers. Not a pulse could be felt throughout its whole frame, not a breath could be discerned on any enthusiastic mirror held to its mouth. The most scientific punctures in its body failed to elicit any sign of vitality. Even Dr. Richardson would have pronounced it a case of pectoral death.[2] I felt its cold and rigid hand in Glasgow—the last "Social Missionary" station which existed. Though experienced in the pathology of dead movements, the case seemed to me suspicious of decease. Wise Americans came over to look at it, and declared with a shrug that it was a "gone coon." Social physicians pronounced life quite extinct. Political economists avowed the creature had never lived. The newspapers, more observant of it, thought it would never recover, which implied that, in their opinion, it had been alive. The clergy, content that

[1] Lord Byron.

[2] Dr. B. W. Richardson maintains that men may recover from glacial death, from pectoral death never.

"Socialism" was reported to be gone, furnished with delighted alacrity uncomfortable epitaphs for its tombstone.

Yet all the while the vital spark was there. Efforts beyond its strength had brought upon it suspended animation. The first sign of latent life was discovered in Rochdale. In the meantime the great comatose movement lay stretched, out of the world's view, but not abandoned by a few devoted Utopians, who had crept from under the slain. Old friends administered to it, familiar faces bent over it. For unnoted years it found voice in the *Reasoner*, which said of it one thing always—"If it be right it can be revived by devotion. Truth never dies except it be deserted." Then a great consultation arose among the social medicine men. The regular physicians of the party, who held official or missionary diplomas, were called in. The licentiates of the platform also attended. The subscribing members of the Community Society, the pharmaceutists of Co-operation, were at hand. They were the chemists and druggists of the movement, who compounded the recipes of the social doctors, when new prescriptions were given out. Opinions were given by the learned advisers, as the symptoms of the patient seemed to warrant them. As in graver consultations, some of the prescriptions were made rather with a view of differing from a learned brother than of saving the patient. The only thing in which the faculty present in this case agreed was, that nobody proposed to bleed the invalid. There was clearly no blood to be got out of him. The first opinion pronounced was that mischief had arisen through want of orthodoxy in Communism. It was thought that if it was vaccinated, by a clergyman of some standing, with the Thirty-nine Articles, it might get about again; and Mr. Minter Morgan produced a new design of a parallelogram with a church in it. It was shown to Mr. Hughes. Some Scotch doctors advised the Assembly's "Shorter Catechisms." A missionary, who had been a Methodist, thought that an infusion of Wesleyan fervour and faith might help it. A Swedenborgian said he knew the remedy, when "Shepherd" Smith [1] persisted that the doctrine of Analogies would set the thing right. Then the regular faculty gave their opinions.

[1] The Rev. J. E. Smith, who edited the *Shepherd* before he edited the *Family Herald*.

Mr. Ironside attested with metallic voice that recovery was possible. Its condition was so weak that, Pater Oldham[1]—with a beard as white and long as Merlin's—prescribed for it celibacy and a vegetarian diet. Charles Lane raised the question, Should it be "stimulated with milk"? which did not seem likely to induce in it any premature action. James Pierrepont Greaves suggested that its "inner life" should be nurtured on a preparation of Principles of Being, of which he was sole proprietor. Mr. Galpin, with patriarchal stateliness, administered to it grave counsel. Thomas Whittaker presented a register of its provincial pulsations, which he said had never ceased. Mr. Craig suggested fresh air, and if he meant commercial air there was need of it. George Simpson, its best financial secretary, advised it neither to give credit nor take it, if it hoped to hold its own. Dr. John Watts prescribed it a business dietary, flavoured with political economy, which was afterwards found to strengthen it. John Colier Farn, who had the Chartist nature, said it wanted robust agitation. Alexander Campbell, with Scotch pertinacity, persisted that it would get round with a little more lecturing. Dr. Travis thought its recovery certain, as soon as it comprehended the Self-determining power of the will. Charles Southwell chafed at the timorous retractations of some of his colleagues, avowed that the imprisonment of some of them would do the movement good. William Chilton believed that persecution alone would reanimate it, and bravely volunteered to stand by the cause in case it occurred. Maltus Questell Ryall, generously indignant at the imprisonment of certain of his friends, spoke as Gibbon was said to have written—"as though Christianity had done him a personal injury"—predicted that Socialism would be itself again if it took courage and looked its clerical enemies square in the face. Mr. Allsop, always for boldness, counselled it to adopt Strafford's motto of "Thorough." George Alexander Fleming surmised that its proper remedy was better obedience to the Central Board. James Rigby tried to awaken its attention by spreading before its eyes romantic pictures of Communistic life. Lloyd Jones admonished it, in sonorous tones, to have more faith in associative duty. Henry

[1] The attenuated and picturesque Principal of the Ham Common Concordium.

Hetherington, whose honest voice sounded like a principle, advocated a stout publicity of its views. James Watson, who shook hands, like a Lancashire man, from the shoulder, with a fervour which you would have cause to remember all the day after, grasped the sinking cause by the hand,[1] and imparted some feeling to it. Mr. Owen, who never doubted its vitality, regarded the moribund movement with complacency, as being in a mere millennial trance. Harriet Martineau brought it gracious news from America of the success of votaries out there, which revived it considerably. John Stuart Mill inspired it with hope, by declaring that there was no reason in political economy why any self-helping movement of the people should die. Mr. Ashurst looked on with his wise and kindly eyes, to see that recovery was not made impossible by new administrative error. But none of the physicians had restored it, if the sagacious men of Rochdale had not discovered the method of *feeding it on profits*—the most nutritious diet known to social philosophy—which, administered in successive and ever-increasing quantities, gradually restored the circulation of the comatose body, opened its eyes, and set it up alive again, with a capacity of growth which the world never expected to see it display.

It was not until a new generation arose that co-operative enthusiasm was seen again. The Socialists were not cowards in commerce. They could all take care of themselves in competition as well as their neighbours. The police in every town knew them as the best disposed of the artisan class. Employers knew them as the best workmen. Tradesmen knew them as men of business, of disquieting ability. These societarian improvers disliked the conspiracy against their neighbours which competition compelled them to engage in, and they were anxious to find some means of mitigating it.

Of two parties to one undertaking, the smaller number, the capitalists, are able to retain profits sufficient for affluence, while the larger number, the workers, receive a share which, by no parsimony or self-denial, can secure them competence. No insurrection can remedy the evil. No sooner shall the bloody field be still than the same system

[1] I am not sure whether a "cause" has a "hand"; perhaps it has, as it certainly has a heart.

will reproduce the same inequalities. But a better course is open by producers giving security and interest for capital, and dividing the profits earned among themselves, a new distribution of wealth is obtained which accords capital equitable compensation, and secures labour enduring provision. Thus the advocates of the new form of industry by concert tried to combat competition by co-operation.

The *Concordium* had a poet, James Elmslie Duncan, a young enthusiast, who published a *Morning Star* in Whitechapel, where it was much needed. The most remarkable specimen of his genius, I remember, was his epigram on a draped statue of Venus—

> "Judge, ye gods, of my surprise,
> A lady naked in her chemise!"

We had poets in those days unknown to Mr. Swinburne or Sir Lewis Morris.

The Ham Common Concordium fell as well as Harmony Hall. The Concordium represented celibacy, mysticism, and long beards. One night, I and Maltus Questell Ryall walked from London to visit it. We found it by observing a tall patriarch's feet projecting through the window. It was a device of the Concordium to ensure ventilation and early rising. By a bastinado of the soles of the prophet with pebbles, we obtained admission in the early morning. Salt, sugar, and tea were alike prohibited; and my wife, who wished salt with the raw cabbage supplied at breakfast, was allowed to have it, on the motion of Mr. Stolzmeyer, the agent of Etzler's "Paradise within the Reach of all Men." When the salt was conceded it was concealed in paper under the plate, lest the sight of it should deprave the weaker brethren. On Sundays many visitors came, but the entertainment was slender. On my advice they turned two fields into a strawberry garden, and for a charge of ninepence each, visitors gathered and ate all they could. This prevented them being able to eat much at other meals, for which they paid—and thus the Concordium made money.

CHAPTER XV

BEGINNING OF CONSTRUCTIVE CO-OPERATION

None from his fellow starts,
But playing manly parts,
And, like true English hearts,
Stick close together.

DRAYTON.

THOSE who sleep on the banks of the Thames, near Temple Bar, as I did several years, hear in the silence of the night a slow, intermittent contest of clocks. Bow Bells come pealing up the river; St. Dunstan, St. Clement, St. Martin, return the answering clangour. Between the chiming and the striking there suddenly bursts out the sonorous booming of Big Ben from the Parliament clock tower, easily commanding attention in the small Babel of riverside tinklings, and the wakeful hearer can count with certainty the hour from him. To me Rochdale was in one sense the Big Ben of Co-operation, whose sound will long be heard in history over that of many other stores. For half a century Co-operation was audible on the banks of the Humber, the Thames, and the Tyne; but when the great peal finally arose from the banks of the Roche, Lancashire and Yorkshire heard it. Scotland lent it a curious and suspicious ear. Its reverberations travelled to France, Italy, Germany, Russia, and America, and even at the Antipodes settlers in Australia caught its far-travelling tones, and were inspired by it. The men of Rochdale had the very work of Sisyphus before them. The stone of Co-operation had often been rolled up the hill elsewhere, and as often rolled down again. Sometimes it was being dragged up by credit, when, that rope breaking, the reluctant bell slipped into a bog of debt. At length some enthusiasts gave

another turn, when some watchful rascal made away with its profits, which had acted as a wedge, steadying the weight on the hill, and the law being on the side of the thief, let the great boulder roll back. Another set of devotees gave a turn at the great boulder, but having theological questions on hand, they fell into discussion by the way, as to whether Adam was or was not the first man ; when those who said he was refused to push with those who said he was not, and Adam was the cause of another fall in the new Eden, and the co-operative stone found its way once more to the bottom.

At length the Rochdale men took the stone in hand. They invented an interest for everybody in pushing. They stopped up the debt bogs. They mainly established a Wholesale Supply Society, and made the provisions better. They got the law amended, and cleared out the knaves who hung about the till. They planned employment of their profits in productive manufactures, so that the store and workshop might grow. They proclaimed toleration to all opinions—religious and heretical alike—and recognised none. They provided for the education of their members, so that every man knew what to push for and where to place his shoulder, and were the first men who landed the great stone at the top.

When Co-operation recommenced there, Rochdale had no hall which Co-operators could afford to hire. There was, however, a small, square-shaped room, standing in the upper part of Yorkshire Street, opposite to St. James's Church, and looking from the back windows over a low, damp, marshy field. It belonged to Mr. Zach Mellor, the Town Clerk, whose geniality and public spirit were one of the pleasant attributes of official Rochdale. He was, happily, long of opinion that any townsmen, however humble, desirous of improving their condition by honest means, had as much right as any one else to try. He treated—as town clerks should—with civic impartiality all honest townsmen, without regard to their social condition or opinions. Through the personal intervention of Mr. Alderman Livesey, always the advocate of the unfriended, this place was let to the adventurous party of half Chartists and half Socialists who cared for Co-operation. It was in this small Dutch-looking meeting-house that I first spoke on Co-operation, in 1843. I well remember the murky

evening when this occurred. It was the end of one of those damp, drizzling days, when a manufacturing town looks like a penal settlement. I sat watching the rain and mists in the fields as the audience assembled—which was a small one. They came in one by one from the mills, looking as damp and disconsolate as their prospects. I see their dull, hopeless faces now. There were a few with a bustling sort of confidence, as if it would dissolve if they sat still—who moved from bench to bench to say something which did not seem very inspiring to those who heard it. When I came to the desk to speak I felt that neither my subject nor my audience was a very hopeful one. In those days my notes were far beyond the requirements of the occasion; and I generally left my hearers with the impression that I tried to say too much in the time, and that I spoke of many things without leaving certainty in their minds which was the most important. The purport of what I said, as far as it had a purport, was to this effect:—

I.

Some of you have had experience of Chartist associations, and you have not done much in that way yet. Some of you have taken trouble to create what you call Teetotalers, but temperance depends more upon social condition than exhortation. The hungry will feel low, and the despairing will drink. You have tried to establish a co-operative store here and have failed, and are not hopeful of succeeding now. Still it ought to be tried again, and will not interfere with Chartism; it will give it more means. It will not interfere with temperance; it will furnish more motives to sobriety. Many of you believe Co-operation to be right in principle, and if a thing is right you ought to go on with it. Cobbett tells you the only way to do a difficult thing is to begin and stick at it. Anybody can begin it, but it requires men of a good purpose to stick at it. To collect money from people, who to all appearance have little, is not a hopeful undertaking. Somebody must collect small subscriptions until you have a few pounds. A few rules to act upon, a small room to serve as a sort of shop, and small articles such as you are most likely to sell, as good as you can get them; weigh them out fairly;

then a store is begun. There may be trouble an home; wives prefer going to the old shops, not knowing that credit is catching and debt is the disease they get. A wife will not always have money to buy at the store, and will want to go where she can do so without; you must provide for this, for buying at the store is the only way to make it grow and yield profit. What you save will be you own, and your stock will grow, and you will get things as good as your neighbours, and as cheap as your neighbours. Besides, when you have a shop as large as that of ten shops, you will save the shop-keeping expenses of ten shops, and that will make profit which will be shared by all members. If you want to help the Community in Hampshire, you will then be able to do it. You may be able to set apart some portions of your profits for a news-room and little library where members may spend their evenings, instead of going to the public-house, and save money that way, as well as get information. This is the way stores have been begun. Co-operators have been instructed that all men are different by nature, and come into the world with passions and tendencies they did not give themselves. Ignorance and adversity make the bad worse. Noble self-denial, pettiness, and selfishness will mingle in the same person. Those who understand this are fit for association. Anger at what you do not like, or what you do not expect, can only proceed from ignorance taken by surprise. Tolerance and steadfast goodwill are the chief virtues of association. The rhyme which tells the young speaker to speak slowly, and emphasis and tone will come of themselves, has instruction for you if we change a word to express it—

> "Learn to *unite*—all other graces
> Will follow in their proper places."

If you do not regard all creeds as being equally true and equally useful, you will regard them as equally to be respected. In co-operative associations success is always in the power of those who can agree. There the members have no enemies who can harm them but themselves; and when a man has no enemy but himself, he is a fool if he is without a friend. Pope tells you that—

> "The devil is wiser now than in the days of yore;
> Now he tempts people by making rich, and not by making poor."

There is certain consolation in that. He has been with you on that business. Your difficulties will lie, not in negotiating with *him*, but in stating your case to your neighbours, that they shall see the good sense of your aims. The main thing you have to avoid is what the Yankees call "tall statements." We are all agreed that competition has a disagreeable edge. But if we should be betrayed into saying that we intend to abolish it, we go beyond our power. But we can mitigate it. When they open a store to sell at market prices, opponents will ask you how you will find out the market price when there are no markets left. There are people who would ask the Apostles how they intended to apply the doctrine of the atonement for sin, when the millennium arrives and all people are perfect. Beware of inquirers who are born before their time, and who spend their lives in putting questions which will not need answering for centuries to come. If workmen increase in numbers the tradesman does not like it. It means more poor rates for him to pay. The gentry do not like it. It means that they would have to cut you down, if riot should follow famine. The only persons whom over-population profits are those who hire labour, because numbers make it cheap. Your condition is so bad that fever is your only friend, which kills without exciting ill-feeling, thins the labour market, and makes wages rise. The children of the poor are less comely than they would be were they better fed, and their minds, for want of instruction, are leaner than their bodies. The little instruction they get is the bastard knowledge given by the precarious, grudging, intermitting, humiliating hand of Charity.[1] Take notice of the changed condition of things since the days of your forefathers. The stout pole-axe and lusty arm availeth not now to the brave. The battle of life is fought now with the tongue and the pen, and the rascal who has learning is more than a match for a hundred honest men without it. Anybody can see that the little money you get is half wasted, because you cannot spend it to advantage. The worst food comes to the poor, which their poverty makes them buy, and their necessity makes them eat. Their stomachs are

[1] There were no School Boards in those days, and the Dissenters prevented there being any, and offered us instead good-natured but shabby, limping, inefficient voluntary education, which never could, and never did educate a quarter of the people.

the waste-baskets of the State. It is their lot to swallow all the adulterations in the market. In these days you all set up in a way as politicians. You go in for the Charter. You allow agitators to address you as the "sovereign people." You want to be electors, and counted as persons of political consequence in the State, and be treated as only gentlemen are now. Now, being a gentleman does not merely mean having money. There are plenty of scoundrels who have that. That which makes the name of gentleman sweet is being a man of good faith and good honour. A gentleman is one who is considerate to others; who never lies, nor fears, nor goes into debt, nor takes advantage of his neighbours; and the poorest man in his humble way can be all this. If you take credit of a shopkeeper you cannot, while you owe him money, buy of another. In most cases you keep him poor by not paying him. The flesh and bones of your children are his property. The very plumpness of your wife, if she has it, belongs to your butcher and your baker. The pulsation of your own heart beats by charity. The clothes on your backs, such as they are, are owned by some tailor. He who lives in debt walks the streets a mere mendicant machine. Thus all debt is self-imposed degradation, and he who incurs it lives in bondage and shabbiness all his days. It is worth while trying Co-operation again to get out of this.

II.

Is there any avenue of competition through which you could creep? If there be, get into it. In another country you might have a chance; in England you have none. Every bird in the air, every fish in the stream, every animal in the woods, every blade of grass in the fields, every inch of ground has an owner, and there is no help except that of self-help in concert, for any one. If you say you failed through trying to be honest, nobody will believe you; so few run that risk. It is not considered "good business." Be sure of this. Honesty has its liabilities. There are those who tell you of the advantages of truth, but never of its dangers. Truth is dignity, but also a peril; and unless a man knows both sides of it, he will turn into the easy road of prevarication, lying, or silence, when

he meets the danger he has not foreseen, and which had not been foretold to him. When you have a little store, and have reached the point of getting pure provisions, you may find your purchasers will not like them, nor know them when they taste them. Their taste will be required to be educated. They have never eaten the pure food of gentlemen, and will not know the taste of it when you supply it to their lips. The London mechanic does not know the taste of pure coffee. What he takes to be coffee is a decoction of burnt corn and chicory.[1] A friend[2] of mine, knowing this, thought it a pity workmen should not have pure coffee, and opened a coffee-house in the Blackfriars Road, where numerous mechanics and engineers passed in the early morning to their work at the engine shops over the bridge. They were glad to see an early house open so near their work. They tried the coffee a morning or two and went away without showing any marks of satisfaction. They talked about it in their workshops. The opinion arrived at was, "they had never tasted such stuff as that sold at the new place." But before taking decisive measures they took some shopmates with them to taste the suspicious beverage. The unanimous conclusion they came to was that the new coffee-house proprietor intended to poison them, and if he had not adulterated his coffee a morning or two later they would have broken his windows or his head. As it was, the evil repute he had acquired ruined his project; and a notice "To let," which shortly after appeared on the shutters, gave consolation to his ignorant indignant customers.[3]

III.

What of ambition or interest has industry in this grim, despairing, sloppy[4] hole of a town, where the parish doctor

[1] This was sixty years ago, and Metropolitan coffee has improved.

[2] George Huggett, secretary of the Middlesex Reform Association, well known in Liberal and co-operative movements from 1830 to 1850.

[3] It ought to be explained that imbecility of taste is not confined to workmen. Some years later a West End brewer, well known as a member of Parliament and as a scrupulous man of business, tried the experiment of producing the purest beverages chemistry could prescribe. Soon, however, such notices of dissatisfaction came in from his respectable customers of all classes that he was fain to desist. Many wine merchants make fortunes out of the ignorant palates of their customers.

[4] Rochdale has improved since those days. It has now a Town Hall worth a day's journey to see. The Pioneers' Central Store is a Doge's

and the sexton (who understand each other) are the best known friends the workmen has. Are there not some here who have lost mother or father, or wife, or child, whose presence made the sunshine of the household which now knows them no more? Does not the very world seem deserted now that voice has gone out of it? What would one not give, how far would one not go, to hear it again? Death will not speak, however earnestly we pray to it; but we might get out of living industry some voice of joy that might gladden thousands of hearts to hear. In all England industry has no tone that makes any human creature glad. Listen with the mind's ear to the cry of every manufacturing town. What is there pleasant in it?[1] Co-operation might infuse a more hopeful tone into it.

If you really think that the principle of the thing is wrong, give it up, announce to your neighbours that you have come to a different opinion. This you ought to do as candid men of right spirit, so that any adopting the opinion you have abandoned may understand they must hold it for reasons of their own, and cannot any longer plead such sanction or authority as your belief might lend to their proceedings. If, however, you have convictions that this is a thing that can be [illegible]t through, put it through. Progress has its witches, as Macbeth had, but the bottom of their old cauldron is pretty well burnt out now. There are still persons who will tell you that others have failed, again and again, and that you pretend to be the wise person, whom the world was waiting for to show it how the thing could be done.[2] But every discoverer who found out what the world was looking for, and

palace compared with any town building which existed when it was erected, and it does not seem to rain so much in Rochdale as in pre-co-operative times. Let the reader see reports made to Parliament of its condition when Sharman Crawford represented it.

[1] Increase of wages, or prospect of competence, there was none in the minds of workmen. Had some said there would be no more reduction of wages, they would have thought the millennium had come. I know it, for I lived long in workshops and never knew a man who had hope of the kind. I never knew the news of self-help was in the world, until I found it in Co-operation.

[2] In a review of Dr. H. Travis's book on "Effectual Reform." "There is," the writer says, "just one little drawback in all these charming pictures; the model village is not built yet, and nobody has ever set about it quite the right way, says our projector, but only let 'me' set about it, and this time you really shall see!"—*Saturday Review*, October 16, 1875.

never met with ; every scientific inventor who has persisted in improving the contrivance, which all who went before him failed to perfect, has been in the same case, and everybody has admitted at last that he was the one wise man the world was waiting for, and that he really knew what nobody else knew, and saw what none who went before him had seen. If you were to take one of those microscopes which are now coming into use, and gather the stem of a rosebud and examine it, you would see a number of small insects, called aphis, travelling along it, in pursuit of some object interesting to its tiny mind. The thing is so small that you can scarcely discern it with the naked eye, but in a microscope you see it put forth its little arms and legs, carefully feeling its way, now stretching out a foot, moving slowly along the side, touching carefully the little projections, moving the limb in the outer air, feeling for a resting-place, never leaving its position till it finds firm ground to stand upon, showing more prudence and patience before it has been alive an hour, than the mass of grown men and women show when they are fifty years of age. The aphis begins to move when it is a minute old, and goes a long way in its one day of life. It does not appear to wait for the applause of surrounding insects. So far as I have observed, it does not ask what its neighbours think, nor pay much attention to what they say after it has once set out. Its wise little mind seems devoted to seeing that in every step forward its foothold is secure. If you have half the prudence and sagacity of these little creatures, who are so young that their lives have to be counted by minutes, and are so small you might carry a million of them in your waistcoat pocket,[1] you might make Co-operation a thing to be talked about in Rochdale. Do not, like crabs, walk sideways to your graves, but do some direct, resolute thing before you die.

I expressed, as I had done elsewhere, my conviction that the right men could do the right thing. My final words were as positive as those used by a great master in the art of expressing wilfulness[2] :—

[1] These prompt little people, born in the morning, marry before breakfast, are grandfathers by the afternoon, and rank as city fathers before the sun goes down.

[2] "Bothwell," by A. C. Swinburne.

> "This I cannot tell,
> Whence I do know it; but that I know it I know,
> And by no casual or conjectural proof;
> . . . but I know it
> Even as I know I breathe, see, hear, feel, speak,
> And am not dead,"

that I shall see Co-operation succeed here or elsewhere.

The audience were glad it was over; something was said which implied the impression that a real fanatic had come to Rochdale at last. Other advocates oft visited the town. This address was one of that propagandist time, and will give the reader the arguments of the pre-Rochdale days.[1] For twenty years after that time, whenever I arrived in Rochdale, some store leaders met me at the railway station, and when I asked, "Where I was to go to?" the answer was, "Thou must come and see store." My portmanteau was taken there, my letters were addressed there, my correspondence was written there, and my host was commonly James Smithies, or Abram Greenwood. My earliest recollection is of having chops and wool at Smithies', for he was a waste dealer, and the woolly odour was all over the house.

The ascendancy of a new movement seems natural in large towns. The larger the town the greater the need of stores, and the less is the chance of success. In a large town there is diversity of life and occupation, greater facilities for diversion, greater difficulties of business publicity, greater mobility of employment among workmen, and less likelihood of a dozen or two men remaining long enough together, pursuing one object year after year, necessary to build up a co-operative store. Glasgow is a town where a prophet would say Co-operation would answer. The thrift, patience, and clanship of the Scottish race seem to supply all the conditions of economy and concert. But though the Scotch are the last people to turn back when they once set out, their prudence leads them to wait and see who will go first. They prefer joining a project when they see it succeeding. There are men in Scotland ready to go out on forlorn hopes, but they are exceptions.

[1] I might add, and traditions of their own town, for some knew what I did not know then, of struggles and stores and old endeavours which had purpose in them. As far back as 1830 a co-operative workshop was started in Rochdale.

It came to pass that the men of Rochdale took the field, and Co-operation recommenced with them. Alderman Livesey aided the new movement by his stout-hearted influence. William Smithies, whose laugh was like a festival, kept it merry in its struggling years. William Cooper, with his Danish face, stood up for it. He had what Canon Kingsley called the "Viking blood" in his veins, and pursued every adversary who appeared in public, with letters in the newspapers, and confronted him on platforms. Abram Greenwood came to its aid with his quiet, purposing face, which the *Spectator* [1] said, "ought to be painted by Rembrandt," possibly because that artist, distinguished for his strong contrasts, would present the white light of Co-operation emerging from the dark shades of competition. And others, whose names are elsewhere recorded,[2] contributed in that town to the great revival.

[1] London *Spectator*.
[2] "History of Co-operation in Rochdale," Parts I. and II.

CHAPTER XVI

THE DISCOVERY WHICH RE-CREATED CO-OPERATION

"They gave me advice and counsel in store,
Praised me and honoured me more and more;

. . . .

But, with all their honour and approbation,
I should, long ago, have died of starvation;
Had there not come an excellent man,
Who bravely to help me along began.

. . . .

Yet I cannot embrace him—though other folks can:
For I *myself* am this excellent man!"

HEINE, translated by Leland.

THE men of Rochdale were they who first took the name of Equitable Pioneers. Their object was to establish equity in industry—the idea which best explains the spirit of modern Co-operation. Equity is a better term than Co-operation, as it implies an equitable share of work and profit, which the word Co-operation does not connote. Among the Pioneers was an original, clear-headed, shrewd, plodding thinker, one Charles Howarth, who set himself to devise a plan by which the permanent interest of the members was secured. It was that the profits made by sales should be divided among all members who made purchases, in proportion to the amount they spent, and that the shares of profits coming due to them should remain in the hands of the directors until it amounted to £5, they being registered as shareholders of that amount. This sum they would not have to pay out of their pockets. The store would thus save their shares for them, and they would thus become shareholders without it costing them anything; so that if all went wrong they lost nothing; and if they stuck like sensible men to the store, they might save in

the same way other £5, which they could draw out as they pleased. By this scheme the stores ultimately obtained £100 of capital from each twenty members. For this capital they paid an interest of 5 per cent. Of course, before any store could commence, some of the more enterprising promoters must subscribe capital to buy the first stock. This capital in Rochdale was mostly raised by weekly subscriptions of twopence. In order that there might be as much profit as possible to divide among purchasers, 5 per cent. has become to be regarded as the Co-operative standard rate of interest. The merit of this scheme was that it created capital among men who had none, and allured purchasers to the store by the prospect of a quarterly dividend of profits upon their outlay. Of course those who had the largest families had the largest dealings, and it appeared as though the more they ate the more they saved—a fortunate illusion for the hungry little ones who abounded in Rochdale then.

The device of dividing profits with purchasers was original with Mr. Howarth, although seventeen years in operation at no very great distance from Rochdale. It is singular that it was not until twenty-six years after Mr. Howarth had devised his plan (1844), that any one was aware that it was in operation in 1827. Mr. William Nuttall, in compiling a statistical table for the *Reasoner* in 1870, discovered that an unknown society, at Meltham Mills, near Huddersfield, had existed for forty-three years, having been commenced in 1827, and had divided profits on purchases from the beginning. But it found neither imitators nor propagandists in England.

Mr. Alexander Campbell also claimed to have recommended the same principle in an address which he drew up for the Co-operative Bakers of Glasgow, in 1822: that he fully explained it to the co-operators of Cambuslang, who adopted it in 1831; and that a pamphlet was circulated at the time containing what he said upon the subject. Mr. Campbell further declared that in 1840 he lectured several times in Rochdale, and in 1843–4, when they were organising their society of Equitable Pioneers, they consulted him, and he advised them by letter to adopt the principle of dividing profits on purchases, and, at the same time, assisted in forming the

London Co-operative Society on the same principle. No one has ever produced the pamphlet referred to, or any copy of the rules of any Scotch society, containing the said plan, nor is any mention of it in London extant. Yet it is not unlikely that Mr. Campbell had the idea before the days of Mr. Howarth. It is more likely that the idea of dividing profits with the customer was separately originated. Few persons preserve records of suggestions or rules which attracted small attention in their day. All the Pioneers contemporary with him believed the plan originated with Howarth. The records of the patent offices of all countries show that important inventions have been made again, by persons painfully startled to find that the idea which had cost them years of their lives to work out, had been perfected before they were born. Coincidence of discovery in mechanics, in literature, and in every department of human knowledge, is an axiom among men of experience. From 1822 to 1844 stores limped along and failed to attract growing custom, while dividends were paid only on capital.

It was by taking the public into partnership that the new Co-operation came to grow.[1] Few persons believed stores could be re-established. Customers at the store were scarce and uncertain, it was so small a sum that was likely to arise to be given them, and for a long time it was so little that it proved little attraction. The division of profits among customers, though felt to be a promising step, not being foreseen as a great fortune, was readily agreed to. No one foresaw what a prodigious amount it would one day be. Thirty years later the profits of the Rochdale Store amounted to £50,668, and the profits of the Halifax Store reached £19,820, and those of Leeds £34,510. Had these profits existed in Mr. Howarth's time, and he had proposed to give such amazing sums to mere customers, he would have been deemed mad, and not half a dozen persons would have listened to him outside Bedlam. When twenty members constituted a society, and they made with difficulty ten shillings a year of profit altogether, the proposal to divide it excited no suspicion.

[1] The story told in "Self-Help, or History of the Equitable Pioneers of Rochdale," by the present author, has been retold by translators in many languages.

A clear income of sixpence, as the result of twelve months' active and daily attention to business, excited no jealousy. But had £50,000 been at the disposal of the committee, that would have seemed a large fortune for twelve directors, and no persuasive power on earth would have induced them to divide that among the customers. It would have been said, "What right has the customer to the gains of our trade? What does he do towards creating them? He receives value for his money. He gives no thought, he has no cares, he performs no duties, he takes no trouble, he incurs no risks. If we lose he pays no loss. Why should we enrich him by what we win?" Nobody then could have answered these questions. But when the proposal came in the insidious form of dividing scanty profits, with scarce customers, Mr. Howarth's scheme was adopted, and Co-operation rose from the grave in which short-sighted greed had buried it, and it began the mighty and stalwart career with which we are now conversant. It really seems as though the best steps we take never would be taken, if we knew how wise and right they were.

The time came when substantial profits were made—actually paid over the counter, tangible in the pocket, and certain of recurrence, with increase, at every subsequent quarter-day. The fact was so unexpected that when it was divulged it had all the freshness and suddenness of a revelation to outsiders. The effect of this patient, unforeseen success was diffused about—we might say, in apostolical language—"noised abroad." There needed no advertisement to spread it. When profits—a new name among workpeople—were found to be really made, and known to be really paid to members quarter by quarter, they were copiously heard of. The animated face of the co-operator suggested that his projects were answering with him. He appeared better fed, which was not likely to escape notice among hungry weavers. He was better dressed than formerly, which gave him distinction among his shabby comrades in the mill. The wife no longer had "to sell her petticoat," known to have been done in Rochdale, but had a new gown, and she was not likely to be silent about that; nor was it likely to remain much in concealment. It became a walking and graceful advertisement of Co-operation in every part of the town. Her neighbours were not slow to notice

the change in attire, and their very gossip became a sort of propagandism ; and other husbands received hints they might as well belong to the store. The children had cleaner faces, and new pinafores or new jackets, and they propagated the source of their new comforts in their little way, and other little children communicated to their parents what they had seen. Some old hen coops were furbished up and new pullets were observed in them—the cocks seemed to crow of Co-operation. Here and there a pig, which was known to belong to a co-operator, was seen to be fattening, and seemed to squeal in favour of the store. After a while a pianoforte was reported to have been heard in a co-operative cottage, on which it was said the daughters played co-operative airs, the like of which had never been heard in that quarter. There were wild winds, but neither tall trees nor wild birds about Rochdale ; but the weavers' songs were not unlike those of the dusky gondoliers of the South, when emancipation first came to them :—

"We pray de Lord he gib us sign
Dat one day we be free ;
De north wind tell it to de pines,
De wild duck to de sea.

We tink it when the church bell rings,
We dream it in de dream ;
De rice-bird mean it when he sings,
De eagle when he screams." [1]

The objects of Nature vary, but the poetry of freedom is everywhere the same. The store was talked about in the mills. It was canvassed in the weaving shed. The farm labourer heard of it in the fields. The coal miner carried the news down the pit. The blacksmith circulated the news at his forge. It was the gossip of the barber's chair—the courage of beards being unknown then. Chartists, reluctant to entertain any question but the "Six Points," took the store into consideration in their societies. In the newspapers letters appeared on the new movement. Preachers who found their pew rents increase were more reticent than in former days about the sin of Co-operation. "Toad Lane" (where the store stood) was the subject of conversation in the public-house. It was discussed in the temperance coffee-shop.

[1] Whittier.

The carriers spread news of it in country places, and what was a few years before a matter of derision, became the curious, inquiring, and respectful talk of all those parts. The landlord found his rent paid more regularly, and whispered the fact about. The shopkeeper told his neighbour that customers who had been in his debt for years had paid up their accounts. Members for the Borough became aware that some independent voters were springing up in connection with the store. Politicians began to think there was something in it. Wandering lecturers visiting the town found a better quality of auditors to address, and were invited to houses where tables were better spread than formerly, and were taken to see the store, as one of the new objects of interest in the town, with its news-room, where more London papers could be seen than in any coffee-house in London, and word was carried of what was being done in Rochdale to other towns. News of it got into periodicals in London. Professors and students of social philosophy from abroad came to visit it, and sent news of it home to their country. And thus it spread far and wide that the shrewd men of Rochdale were doing a notable thing in the way of Co-operation. It was all true, and honour will long be accorded them. For it is they, in whatever rank, who act for the right when others are still, who decide when others doubt, who urge forward when others hang back, to whom the glory of great change belongs.

Thus the Rochdale Co-operators found, like Heine, "that his best friend was himself."



THE ORIGINAL TOAD LANE STORE, ROCHDALE.

The Doffers appear on the Opening Day.

[*To face p.* 283.

CHAPTER XVII

CAREER OF THE PIONEER STORE

"But every humour hath its adjunct pleasure,
Wherein it finds a joy above the rest:
But these particulars are not my measure,
All these I better in one general best."
SHAKESPEARE.

THE first we hear of Rochdale in co-operative literature is an announcement in the *Co-operative Miscellany* for July, 1830, which "rejoices to hear that through the medium of the *Weekly Free Press* a co-operative society has been formed in this place, and is going on well. Three public meetings have been held to discuss the principles. They have upwards of sixty members, and are anxious to supply flannels to the various co-operative societies. We understand the prices are from £1 15s. a piece to £5, and that J. Greenhough, Wardleworth Brow, will give every information, if applied to."

The Rochdale flannel weavers were always in trouble for want of work. In June, 1830, they had a great meeting on Cronkey Shaw Moor, which is overlooked by the house once owned by Mr. Bright. At that time there were as many as 7,000 men out of employ. There was an immense concourse of men, women, and children on the moor, although a drizzling rain fell during the speeches—it always does rain in Rochdale when the flannel weavers are out. One speaker, Mr. Hinds, declared "that wages had been so frequently reduced in Rochdale that a flannel weaver could not, by all his exertions and patience, obtain more than from 4s. to 6s. per week." Mr. Renshaw quoted the opinion of "Mr. Robert Owen at Lanark, a gentleman whose travels gave him ample scope for observation, who had declared, at a recent public meeting in London, 'that the

inhabitants of St. Domingo, who were black slaves, seemed to be in a condition greatly to be preferred to that of English operatives.'"[1] Mr. Renshaw said that "when his hearers went home they would find an empty pantry mocking their hungry appetites, the house despoiled of its furniture, an anxious wife with a highway paper, or a King's taxes paper, in her hand, but no money to discharge such claim. God help the poor man when misfortune overtook him! The rich man in his misfortune could obtain some comfort, but the poor man had nothing to flee to. Cureless despondency was the condition to which he was reduced." It was this year that the first co-operative society was formed in Rochdale. The meeting on Cronkey Shaw Moor was on behalf of the flannel weavers who were then out on strike. The Rochdale men were distinguished among unionists of that time for vigorous behaviour. It appears that during the disturbances in Rochdale, in the year 1831, the constables—"villainous constables," as the record I consult describes them — robbed their box. One would think there was not much in it. However, the men succeeded in bringing the constables to justice, and in convicting them of felony.

It would appear that Rochdale habitually moved by two-pences. *The United Trades Co-operative Journal* of Manchester recorded that, notwithstanding the length of time the flannel weavers and spinners had been out, and the slender means of support they had, they had contributed at twopence per man the sum of £30, as their first deposit to the Protection Fund, and that one poor woman, a spinner, who could not raise the twopence agreed upon at their meeting, was so determined not to be behind others in her contributions to what she properly denominated "their own fund," that she actually sold her petticoat to pay her subscriptions.

At the Birmingham Congress of 1832 the Rochdale Society sent a letter urging the utility of "discussing in Congress the establishment of a Co-operative Woollen Manufactory; as the Huddersfield cloth, Halifax and Bradford stuffs, Leicester and Loughborough stockings, and Rochdale flannels required in

[1] Mr. Owen did not distinguish between domestic slaves and field slaves, and dwelt upon social comfort as though it had not occurred to him that freedom was an element of progress.

several respects similar machinery and processes of manufacture, they thought that societies in these towns might unite together and manufacture with advantages not obtainable by separate establishments." At that early period there were co-operators in Rochdale giving their minds to federative projects. Their delegate was Mr. William Harrison, and their secretary, Mr. T. Ladyman, 70, Cheetham Street, Rochdale. Their credentials stated that "the society was first formed in October, 1830, and bore the name of the Rochdale Friendly Society. Its members were fifty-two, the amount of its funds was £108. It employed ten members and their families. It manufactured flannel. It had a library containing thirty-two volumes. It had no school, and never discussed the principles of Labour Exchange, and had two other societies in the neighbourhood." It was deemed a defect in sagacity not to have inquired into the uses of Labour Exchanges as a means of co-operative profit and propagandism. Rochdale from the beginning had a creditable regard for books and education. It also appears —and it is of interest to note it now—that "wholesale" combination was an early Rochdale idea.

From 1830 to 1840 Rochdale went on doing something. One thing recorded is that it converted the Rev. Joseph Marriott to social views—who wrote "Community: a Drama." Another is that in 1838 a "Social Hall" was opened in Yorkshire Street. These facts of Rochdale industrial operations, prior to 1844, when the germ store began, show that this co-operative idea "was in the air." It could hardly be said to be anywhere else until it descended in Toad Lane, and that is where it first touched the earth, took root, and grew.

Like curious and valuable animals which have oft been imported, but never bred from, like rare products of Nature that have frequently been grown without their cultivation becoming general—Co-operation had long existed in various forms; it is only since 1844 that it has been cultivated. Farmers grew wheat before the days of Major Hallett, and practised thin sowing, and made selections of seed—in a way. But it was not until that observing agriculturist traced the laws of growth, and demonstrated the principles of selection, that "pedigree wheat" was possible, and the growing powers of Great Britain were rendered capable of being tripled.

Similar has been the effect of the Pioneer discovery of participation in trade and industry.

Of the "Famous Twenty-eight" old Pioneers, who founded the store by their humble subscriptions of twopence a week, James Smithies was its earliest secretary and counsellor. In his later years he became one of the Town Councillors of the borough—the only one of the Twenty-eight who attained municipal distinction. After a late committee meeting in days of faltering fortunes at the store or the corn mill, he would go out at midnight and call up any one known to have money and sympathy for the cause. And when the disturbed sympathiser was awake and put his head out of the window to learn what was the matter, Smithies would call out, "I am come for thy brass, lad. We mun have it." "All right!" would be the welcome answer. And in one case the bag was fetched with nearly £100 in, and the owner offered to drop it through the window. "No; I'll call in the morning," Smithies replied, with his cheery voice, and then would go home contented that the evil day was averted. In the presence of his vivacity no one could despond, confronted by his buoyant humour no one could be angry. He laughed the store out of despair into prosperity. William Howarth, the "sea lawyer" of Co-operation, is no more. I spoke at the grave of William Cooper, and wrote the inscription for his tomb:—

In Memory of

WILLIAM COOPER

WHO DIED OCTOBER 31ST, 1868, AGED 46 YEARS.

ONE OF THE ORIGINAL "28" EQUITABLE PIONEERS,

HE HAD A ZEAL EQUAL TO ANY, AND EXCEEDED ALL

IN HIS CEASELESS EXERTIONS, BY PEN AND SPEECH.

HE HAD THE GREATER AND RARER MERIT OF STANDING BY PRINCIPLE

ALWAYS, REGARDLESS ALIKE OF INTERESTS, OF FRIENDSHIPS,

OR OF HIMSELF.

AUTHOR OF THE

"HISTORY OF THE ROCHDALE CO-OPERATIVE CORN MILL SOCIETY."

The following page of facts tells the progress and triumph of the Pioneers reduced to figures:—

Table of the operations of the Society from its commencement in 1844 to the end of 1876 :—

Year.	Members.	Funds.	Business.	Profits.
		£	£	£
1844	28	28	—	—
1845	74	181	710	22
1846	80	252	1,146	80
1847	110	286	1,924	72
1848	149	397	2,276	117
1849	390	1,193	6,611	561
1850	600	2,289	13,179	880
1851	630	2,785	17,633	990
1852	680	3,471	16,352	1,206
1853	720	5,848	22,700	1,674
1854	900	7,172	33,364	1,763
1855	1,400	11,032	44,902	3,109
1856	1,600	12,920	63,197	3,921
1857	1,850	15,142	79,789	5,470
1858	1,950	18,160	74,680	6,284
1859	2,703	27,060	104,012	10,739
1860	3,450	37,710	152,063	15,906
1861	3,900	42,925	176,206	18,020
1862	3,501	38,465	141,074	17,564
1863	4,013	49,361	158,632	19,671
1864	4,747	62,105	174,937	22,717
1865	5,326	78,778	196,234	25,156
1866	6,246	99,989	249,122	31,931
1867	6,823	128,435	284,919	41,619
1868	6,731	123,233	290,900	37,459
1869	5,809	93,423	236,438	28,542
1870	5,560	80,291	223,021	25,209
1871	6,021	107,500	246,522	29,026
1872	6,444	132,912	267,577	33,640
1873	7,021	160,886	287,212	38,749
1874	7,639	192,814	298,888	40,679
1875	8,415	225,682	305,657	48,212
1876	8,892	254,000	305,190	50,668

These columns of figures are not dull, prosaic, merely statistical, as figures usually are. Every figure glows with a light unknown to chemists, and which has never illumined any town until the Rochdale day. Our forefathers never saw it. They looked with longing and wistful eyes over the dark plains of industry, and no gleam of it appeared. The light they looked for was not a pale, flickering, uncertain light, but one self-created, self-fed, self-sustained, self-growing, and daily growing, not a light of charity or paternal support, but an inextinguishable, independent light. Every numeral in the table glitters with this new light. Every column is a pillar

of fire in the night of industry, guiding other wanderers than Israelites out of the wilderness of helplessness from their Egyptian bondage.

The Toad Lane Store has expanded into nineteen branches, with nineteen news-rooms. Each branch is a far finer building than the original store. The Toad Lane parent store has long been represented by a great Central Store, a commanding pile of buildings which it takes an hour to walk through, situated on the finest site in the town, and overlooks alike the Town Hall and Parish Church. The Central Stores contain a vast library, which has a permanent librarian, Mr. Barnish. The store spends hundreds of pounds in bringing out a new catalogue as the increase of books needs it. Telescopes, field-glasses, microscopes innumerable, exist for the use of members. There are many large towns where gentlemen have no such newsrooms, so many daily papers, weekly papers, magazines, reviews, maps, and costly books of reference, as the working class co-operators of Rochdale possess. They sustain science classes. They own property all over the borough. They have estates covered with streets of houses built for co-operators. They have established a large corn mill which was carried through dreary misadventures by the energy and courage of Mr. Abram Greenwood —misadventures trying every degree of patience and every form of industrial faith. They built a huge spinning mill, and conducted it on profit-sharing principles three years, until outside shareholders perverted it into a joint-stock concern. None of the old pioneers looked back on the Sodom of competition. Had they done so they would have been like Lot's wife, saline on the pillar of history. They set the great example of instituting and maintaining an Educational Fund out of their profits. They sought to set up co-operative workshops—to employ their own members and support them on land, of which they should be the owners, and create a self-supporting community.

CHAPTER XVIII

PARLIAMENTARY AID TO CO-OPERATION

"Law is but morality shaped by Act of Parliament."—MR. BERNAL, Chairman of Committees, House of Commons.

THE device of Mr. Howarth had not carried Co-operation far, had it not been for friendly lawyers and Parliament. The legal impediments to industrial economy were serious in 1844. Because "men cannot be made wise by Act of Parliament" is no reason for not making Acts of Parliament wise. "Law should be morality shaped by Act of Parliament." None, however, knew better than Mr. Bernal, that if there was any morality in a Bill at first it often got "shaped" out of it before it became an Act. Nevertheless there is a great deal of living morality in the world which would be very dead had not law given it protection. A law once made is a chain or a finger-post—a barrier or a path. It stops the way or it points the way. If an obstacle it stands like a rock. It comes to be venerated as a pillar of the constitution. The indifferent think it as well as it is—the timid are discouraged by it—the busy are too occupied to give attention to it. At last, some ardent, disinterested persons, denounced for their restlessness, persuade Parliament to remove it, and the nation passes forward.[1]

The Legislature did open new roads of industrial advancement. Working men can become sharers in the profits of a commercial undertaking without incurring unlimited liability,

[1] It was the Rev. William Nassau Molesworth, then incumbent of Spotland, Rochdale, who, discerning in the early efforts of the Pioneers, the prospect of social improvement, first suggested to them the advantages of obtaining the protection of the law for their members.

an advantage so great that the most sanguine despaired of living to see its enactment. This act was mainly owing to William Schofield, M.P. for Birmingham.

In a commercial country like England, one would naturally expect that law would be in favour of trade; yet so slow was the recognition of industrial liberty that an Act was a long time in force, which enabled a society to sell its products to its own members, but not to others. Thus the Leeds Corn Mill, as Mr. John Holmes related, naturally produced bran as well as flour, could sell its flour to its members, and its bran also, if its members wanted it. But the members, not being rabbits, did not want the bran; and at one time the Corn Mill Society had as much as £600 worth of bran accumulated in their store-rooms which they were unable to sell to outside buyers. Societies were prohibited holding more than one acre of land, and that not as house or farm land, but only for transacting the business of the society upon. The premises of the Equitable Pioneers occupied land nearly to the extent allowed by the Act. All thoughts of leasing or purchasing land whereon to grow potatoes, corn, or farm produce were prevented by this prohibitory clause. Co-operative farming was difficult. No society could invest money except in savings banks or National Debt funds. No rich society could help a poor society by a loan. No member could save more than £100. The Act prohibited funds being used for educational purposes, and every member was practically made responsible for all the debts of the society—enough to frighten any prudent man away. Besides these impediments, there was no provision compelling any member to give up such property, books, or records that might have been entrusted to him by the society; so that any knave was endowed with the power, and secured in the means, of breaking up the society when a fit of larceny seized him.

The Friendly Societies Act of 1846 contained what came to be known as the "Frugal Investment Clause," as it permitted the frugal investment of the savings of members for better enabling them to purchase food, firing, clothes, or materials of their trade or calling, or to provide for the education of their children or kindred. In 1850, Mr. Slaney, M.P., obtained a committee upon the savings and investments of the middle and working classes. Important evidence was given by

various persons, including Mr. J. S. Mill, Mr. Hughes, Mr. Bellenden Kerr, Mr. Ludlow, and Mr. Vansittart Neale. Mr. Neale has stated that "Mr. Mill rendered a great and lasting service to co-operative effort by the distinction drawn between the conditions affecting all labour carried on by mankind from the nature of the earth and of man, and the mode in which human institutions may affect the distribution of the products of this labour—two matters commonly confused by political economists, who treat the results of human selfishness, intensified by competition, as if they were unalterable laws of the universe." [1]

The Industrial and Provident Societies Act of 1852 (15 and 16 Vict., c. 31), introduced by Mr. Slaney, in consequence of the report of the Committee of 1850, authorised the formation of societies by the voluntary subscription of the members, for attaining any purpose (permitted by the laws in force in respect to Friendly Societies, or by that Act), "by carrying on in common any labours, trades, or handicrafts, except the working mines, minerals, or quarries, beyond the limits of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and the business of banking." It made all the provisions of the laws relating to Friendly Societies apply to every society constituted under it, except in so far as they were expressly varied by the Act, or any rule expressly authorised or certified by an endorsement on its rules, signed by the Registrar of Friendly Societies, not to be applicable to it. In consequence, Industrial and Provident Societies, while allowed to carry on trade as general dealers, obtained all the advantages given to Friendly Societies, in regard to the vesting of their funds, without conveyance, in their trustees, protection against fraud by their officers; whence the Corn Mill Society of Rochdale dissolved itself in order to be enrolled under the new Act, that it might recover debts due to it. In 1855, the position of Industrial and Provident Societies in this respect was slightly amended; but, unfortunately, in another respect it was altered for the worse by the Frugal Investment Clause, under which Friendly Societies were authorised, among other things, to provide for the

[1] *Co-operative News.*

Education of their children, being struck out.[1] The Industrial and Provident Societies Act limited itself to authorising the application of profits to "the payment of a dividend on capital not exceeding 5 per cent. per annum [an effective preventive of speculation in the shares of societies], the repayment of loans, the increase of the capital of the society, division among the members or persons employed by them, and such provident purposes as are authorised by the laws relating to Friendly Societies." Thus, indirectly, the effect was that of preventing Industrial and Provident Societies from following the excellent example of Rochdale in regard to the application of their profits, to establish news-rooms, libraries, lectures, or other means of educating themselves. It was an effect of which probably no one in Parliament thought; for, though the Industrial and Provident Societies Act was amended by the 19 and 20 Vict., c. 40, no notice is taken of this restriction. The Act of 1862 authorised the application of profits for any purpose allowed by the Friendly Societies Acts, or otherwise permitted by law. The formation of Educational Funds thus became allowable.[2]

Dr. John Watts stated at the Social Science Congress, Manchester, 1866, that "in no case which has come under his observation, except in the original one at Rochdale, was there in the constitution of the society any educational provision, and personal inquiry had informed him that this is because the Registrar refuses to allow it. The managers of one of the Manchester stores had no less than four months' correspondence on the subject, and the result of the refusal was the necessity for a quarterly vote for the reading-room, in order to avoid a quarterly quarrel, which, after all, is not always averted." Rochdale entered their educational expenses with the expenses of management, and an indispensable and honest place they held there. There are hundreds of

[1] Mr. Tidd Pratt had previously sanctioned rules of societies meditating self-education; as he had by a generous latitude of construction in some earlier cases by which Rochdale had profited from the beginning. Rochdale had been an old offender against the law in prohibiting education.

[2] For these statements I am indebted to Mr. Neale, whom the reader will prefer to follow, Mr. Neale being professionally acquainted with the law.

stores which have never taken advantage of the new law to create an educational fund. And new stores are often opened which have no such provision. These are known as "Dark" stores.

"It must not be forgotten," Mr. Neale has remarked, "how the law of England has affected the working classes, that the privileges given them for the first time in 1862 were also granted in the same year for the first time to the commercial classes. A large part of the evidence before Mr. Slaney's Committee is occupied by the question of the desirableness or mischief of granting limited liability to partners in trade by some method less costly than the one at that time in use—by an Act of Parliament, or a Charter from the Crown, which was shown to have cost the Metropolitan Dwellings Association over £1,000. By the Companies Act of 1862 this was done in the interests of the trading classes, and in the same year the working classes obtained the full measure of legal rights then conferred upon their richer neighbours.

The Act of 1862, by permitting a member to own £200 in the society, doubled the available capital for the extension of operations, and gave new life to societies which, like Halifax, had lain like Rip Van Winkle twenty years without growth or motion. This single improvement in the law awakened it, put activity into it, and it became a great society.

CHAPTER XIX

CO-OPERATION IN STORMY DAYS

"To seek the noblest—'tis your only good,
Now you have seen it ; for that higher vision
Poisons all meaner choice for evermore."

GEORGE ELIOT.

POLITICAL economists, who are all privately persuaded that Nature would never have been able to carry on until now had they not arisen to give it suggestions, were full of predictions that Co-operation might keep up its health in time of average prosperity, but in days of adversity it would take a low fever, fall into bad ways, suffer from coldness in the extremities, have pains in the "chest," and put the social "faculty" to their wits' end to pull the creature through. Let the cotton famine arrive, and fat Rochdale would become as lean as Lazarus.

In 1861, when the American slave war broke out, and the South armed against the North with a view to establishing a separate slave dominion, the dangerous days set in when cotton would be scarce, mills would stop, wages cease, and eating would be interrupted in hundreds of thousands of households. Would white workmen, who were not quite sure they were not slaves themselves, put up with privations year after year, consume their hard-earned and long-treasured savings, all for the sake of their long-heeled, woolly-headed, black-faced brothers, who probably did not understand freedom—would not know what to do with it when it should come, and who most likely cared nothing for it while the pumpkin was plentiful, and the planter's whip fell on somebody else's back ? Sentiments in favour of freedom might be pretty strong at home —where it concerned ourselves—but it would be drawn very

fine and thin when it had to reach all the way from Rochdale and Leeds to the cotton swamps of the Southern States. The French and Italian workmen might in their chivalrous way die for an idea, but John Bull might have small sympathy for the remote "nigger," whose ebony caprices and apple-squash ideas of liberty interfere with John's repast. If members of Parliament, sure of good dinners and the bountiful resources of territorial acres—if noblemen who grew rich while they slept—if merchants and manufacturers, wealthy beyond the dreams of avarice or limits of public safety—could basely cry, "Open the ports, and let the negro howl under the whip," half-educated or wholly uneducated workmen could not be expected to be discerning, or generously solicitous for the welfare of distant Samboes.

So thought the mob of politicians of that day, for, as Samuel Bailey says, "those are a mob who act like one," and neither a good coat nor high station alters the mob quality. Character goes by acts. Copperheads, clerical and political, infested Lancashire and Yorkshire, retailing insidious proposals to recognise the South. In these I do not include the honest politicians who really believed that the separation of North and South would increase the individuality of nations, and conduce to general progress. I speak here only of the Copperhead class. The Copperhead in America was a political creature who talked union and helped separation; and when their agents came among the co-operators of the North of England, talked freedom and argued for slavery, they disguised their aim under specious forms of trade policy. Physiology and Scripture were pointed against the Negro in lecture-room and pulpit. Ultimately the Copperheads slunk away under a storm of discerning scorn. Many a stout blast blew from Rochdale.

Statistics (an ugly, recondite, abstract, discomfiting word, invented, one would think, to turn attention from the study of facts) of business done by co-operators in cotton famine days will be instructive. The King Street Industrial Society, Oldham, is an example :—

Year.	No. of Members.	Capital.	Business.
1861	924	...£9,130	£47,675
1862	824	8,034	41,901
1863	861	9,105	36,366

There are two societies in Oldham, one in King Street, the other at Greenacre Hill. King Street was the larger by about one-sixth. The two societies together had 3,299 members, who did business to the amount of £87,766, and made £7,636 of profit. So that, taken together or singly, Co-operation carried a saucy head in the slave war storm.

Here are a few examples of what were the fortunes of stores elsewhere :—

Name of Store.	No. of Members.	Amount of Business.	Profits Realised.
Liverpool	3,154	£44,355	£3,201
Bury	1,412	47,658	4,089
Bacup	2,296	53,663	6,618

The reader may be assured that no bare bones were found in Mother Hubbard's co-operative cupboard in the cotton famine days. There was no old lady in any competitive district of the working people so bright and plump as she. Bacup workers suffered more from the cotton scarcity than Rochdale. Bacup had scarcely any other branch of trade than cotton. Their store receipts went down nearly one half at the time of the greatest scarcity. The Relief Committee prohibited the recipients going to the store to buy goods with the money given them. They might have bought at the store to more advantage, but probably the Relief Committee considered the shopkeepers more in need of support than the storekeepers. The Liverpool store was little affected by the cotton scarcity. Mr. William Cooper wrote me at the time his estimate of store affairs, which I quote for his amusingly contemptuous appraisement of Manchester. "Liverpool," he said, "has had difficulties of its own making—namely, by giving credit to members—but they have adopted the ready-money system, which will check its sales for a time, but its stability and growth will be all the more certain after. Some of the stores have given to the relief funds. Mossley, Dukinfield, Staleybridge, Ashton, Heywood, Middleton, Rawtenstall, Hyde, have suffered badly, being almost entirely cotton manufacturing towns ; yet none of the stores have failed, so that, taken altogether, the co-operative societies in Lancashire are as numerous and as strong now as before the cotton panic set in. Even *Manchester, which is good for nothing now, except to sell cotton*, has created a Manchester and Salford Store, maintained

for five years an average of 1,200 members, and made for them £7,000 of profit."

The reader may be satisfied of the actual and inherent vitality of Co-operation to withstand vicissitudes. Yorkshire and Lancashire live on cotton. When the American slave-holders' rebellion cut off the supply, of course a cotton famine occurred, and people who regarded Co-operation as a *Great Eastern* ship—too unmanageable for industrial navigation—predicted that it would founder in the southern tempest. The scarcity, instead, however, of destroying co-operative societies, brought out in a conspicuous way the soundness of the commercial and moral principles on which they are founded. Mr. Milner Gibson's parliamentary returns at that time show that co-operative societies had increased to 454, and that this number was in full operation in England and Wales in the third year of the scarcity. The amount of business done by 381 of these societies was upwards of £2,600,000. In Lancashire there were 117 societies, in Yorkshire 96. The number of members in 1863, in the 381 societies, was 108,000. The total amount of the assets of these societies was £793,500, while the liabilities were only £229,000. The profits made by the 381 societies (excluding 73 societies which made no returns) were £213,600; and this in the third year of the great cotton scarcity! It may be, therefore, safely concluded that Co-operation established for itself a place among the vital business forces of the country. No one can foretell where the right steps will lead. No moralist foresees the whole of that ethical change which his maxims will generate. No railway inventor ever had any idea of that omnipresent traffic which has grown up. Mr. Bright and Mr. Cobden, when they first addressed the people in favour of the repeal of the corn laws, scarcely anticipated that one result would be that they should make the English nation heavier. Every man that you meet in the streets now is stouter, and weighs two stone more than he would have done but for Mr. Cobden and Mr. Bright. Calculating from our present population, it may be said that these eminent corn-law repealers have increased the weight of the British race by 400,000 tons. So that if our men were precipitated unarmed against battalions of any other nation in the field, they would have increased advantages in bearing them

down by sheer weight. And the humble co-operative weavers of Rochdale, by saving twopences when they had none to spare, and holding together when others separated, until they had made their store pay, set an example which created for the working classes a new future.

CHAPTER XX

NATURE OF CO-OPERATIVE PRINCIPLE

"It is not co-operation where a few persons join for the purpose of making a profit from cheap purchases, by which only a portion of them benefit. Co-operation is where the whole of the produce is divided. What is wanted is, that the whole of the working class should partake of the profits of labour."—JOHN STUART MILL (Speech at the Crown and Anchor Tavern, London).

EXCITED Labour seems on fire and the Political Economist, albeit a damp creature, seems powerless to extinguish it. Doctrinal streams of "supply and demand" poured upon it, act as petroleum upon flame. Organised capital grinds industry as in the mill of the gods—very small. No protests that capital is his friend reassures the worker. Experience has made him unbelieving.

Sitting at the windows of the Marina, St. Leonards, watching the great ocean raging all alive with tumultuous and ungovernable motion, surging and roaring, I have thought how like it was to the industrial world. There is unfathomable cruelty in murderous waves. Vessels, laden with anxious emigrants, have been, by them, sucked down to death. As far as the eye can stretch the raging ocean covers all space, resembling some insane and boundless beast. Society heaves with the unrest of pitiless competition more devastating than that of the sea. Its remorseless billows wash away the fruits of humble labour. There is no bay or cavern where property lies but is guarded by capitalist or trader, whose knives gleam if the indigent are seen to approach it. The co-operator is not one of them. He can create wealth for himself, and foresees that the rapacity and tumult of greed will be stilled, as the principle of equity in industry comes to prevail.

Co-operation is a very different thing from Co-operation as defined in dictionaries. When several men join in moving a boulder, because one alone could not stir it, it is called Co-operation. In this way, a bundle of sticks bound together present a force of resistance which separately none could pretend to, and in this sense the sticks are as much co-operators as the men. But industrial Co-operation means not only a union for increasing mechanical force, but for obtaining the profit of the transaction, and having it equitably distributed among those who do the work. It is not knowing this difference which causes such confusing chatter in the highest quarters in literature about "Co-operation being as old as the world," and "which has been practised by every people."

Gibbon Wakefield says: "Co-operation takes place when several persons help each other in the same employment, as when two greyhounds running together kill more hares than four greyhounds running separately."[1] This is the nature of the Co-operation chiefly known to political economists. But industrial Co-operation unites not merely to kill the hares, but to eat them. The greyhounds of Wakefield run down the hares for their masters—the new co-operative greyhounds run down the hare for themselves. Industrial Co-operation is not only union for creating, but for dividing profits among all who have helped to make them.

Politeness, as explained by that robust master of definition, Dr. Johnson, consists in giving a preference to others rather than to ourselves. In this sense Co-operation may be defined as the politeness of industry, for it consists in giving the total of its produce equitably to those who create it.

Co-operation was, in Mr. Owen's mind, a paternal arrangement of industry, which could be made more profitable than one in which the employer considered only himself. The self-managing scheme, under which working people create profits and retain them among themselves, Mr. Owen did not propound. His idea was to organise the world—Co-operation attempts the more modest task of organising the provision store and the workshop.

Von Sybel defines the Communists proper as "those who

[1] E. G. Wakefield, note to Adam Smith's "Wealth of Nations," 1840.

desired to transfer every kind of property to the State." [1] This is Continental Socialism, not English Co-operation. M. De Metz founded a criminal community. He was a man of wealth. Had he been a poor man he had been regarded as a hired agitator. He was as mad as any other social philanthropist, for he believed in the radical goodness of little scoundrels, and that honesty could be cultivated as successfully as fraud, and criminals colonised into an industrial self-supporting community.

A writer who has a cultivated contempt for social innovations, but not intentionally unfair, remarks: "We have had republican societies like Plato's, Fourier's, and Babeuf's; hierarchical and aristocratic like St. Simon's; theocratic like the Essenes; despotic like the Peruvians and Jesuits; Polygamists like the Mormons; material like Mr. Owen's. Some recommended celibacy as the Essenes—some enforce it as the Shakers, some, like the Owenites, relax the marriage tie; [2] some, like the Harmonists, control it; some, like the Moravians, hold it indissoluble; some would divide the wealth of the society equally among all the members; some, as Fourier, unequally. But one great idea pervades them all—community of property more or less complete, and unreserved common labour, for the common good." [3]

When the Irish Land Bill was before the House of Commons, May 16, 1870, Mr. Gathorne Hardy said, "It was not wise to endorse by the sanction of Parliament the principle that the ownership of land was a better thing than the occupation. He protested against the clause as socialistic and communistic. (Hear, hear.)" [4] When a politician does not well know what to say against an adversary's measures, he calls them "socialistic," a term which, to employ Mr. Grant Duff's useful phrase, is a good "working bugbear." In former days, when a clerical disputant met with an unmanageable argument, he said it was "atheistic," and then it was taken as answered. In these days the perplexed politician, seeing no answer to a principle pressed upon him,

[1] Von Sybel, "Hist. French Rev.," vol. i. bk. ii. p. 249.
[2] This is untrue. Mr. Owen's disciples merely advocated equal facility of divorce for poor as for rich.
[3] "Mistaken Aim," pp. 192 and 193, W. R. Greg.
[4] *Vide* Parliamentary Report.

says it is "communistic." He need give no reasons, the "working bugbear" clears the field of adversaries.

One thing may be taken as true, that the English, whether poor or rich, are not, as a body, thieves. Now and then you find some in both classes who have a predatory talent, which they do not hide in a napkin. Statesmen may sleep in peace. The working men will never steal knowingly, either by crowbar or ballot-box. Tories and Whigs have robbed them; and I think I have seen the Radical hand with marks about it, as though it had been in the people's pocket—doubtless in some moment of patriotic aberration. Nevertheless, the common sense of common men is against peculation.

The *Co-operative Magazine* of 1826 declared happiness as the grand pivot on which the co-operative system turned. "Happiness" was explained as "content and uninjurious enjoyment, that is, enjoyment, not injurious either to one's self or to any other." This, as the Americans say, rather want "grit." The mind slides over it. A later advocate of some mark, Dr. King, of Brighton, defined Co-operation as "the unknown object which the benevolent part of mankind have always been in search of for the improvement of their fellow-creatures." The object of a definition is to make the thing in question known; and we are not helped by being told it is the "unknown." There is, however, something dimly revealed in what he says of "society," which he derived from the Greek word *sanus*, sound or safe, and *lieo*, to call together, the meaning of which was declared to be—to call together for safety.[1] No doubt there is sense in this. Persons do require to be called together for safety; but what they are to do when so called is not defined.

A writer in the *Co-operative Miscellany* of 1830, signing himself "One of the People," saw his way to a clearer specification of the "unknown" thing. He exclaims: "What is Co-operation? some may inquire." Certainly many did make the inquiry. The answer he gives is this: "Co-operation in its fullest sense is the opposite of Competition; instead of competing and striving with each other to procure the necessaries of life, we make common cause, we unite with each other, to procure the same benefits." This is rather

[1] *Co-operative Magazine*, January, 1826, p. 7.

a travelling definition, it moves about a good deal and has no fixed destination. It does not disclose how the "common cause" is made. A definition has light in it as soon as it discloses what a thing is not, and names its contrary. We learn now that Co-operation is not competition; but is the "opposite." This writer gives an explanation of the method of procedure—namely, that a co-operative society devotes the profits of the distributive stores to productive industry and the self-employment of the members of the societies. After a lapse of seventy years, the greater and more important part of the plan—the self-employment of members—is but scantily realised. The educated co-operator has always borne it in mind, and it remains as a tradition of Co-operation that production and self-employment go together.

Mr. Thompson, of Cork, the first systematic writer on Industrial Communities, never defined their object otherwise than to say that "workmen should simply alter the direction of their labour. Instead of working for they know not whom, they were to work for each other." Such a definition could only be made intelligible by details, and these Mr. Thompson gave with much elaboration. As a student under Bentham, Mr. Thompson was sure to mean something definite, but the conditions under which men shall "work for each other," the essential feature of Co-operation, he never otherwise brought within the compass of a definition. But community and Co-operation are distinct things.

Practically, the principle of Co-operation grew out of joint-stock shopkeeping. A few persons with means supplied capital for the business, with the understanding that after interest was paid on their capital, the profits should be devoted to the establishment of a community.

The next conception of it was that of prescribing that each purchaser should be a member of the store, and should subscribe a portion of the capital—the profits, after paying interest, were to be kept by the shareholders. At this point Co-operation stopped eighteen years. Nobody was known to have any conception how it could be improved. If everybody was a shareholder, and the shareholders had all the profits, nobody could have more than all, and nobody was left out of the division. There was no enthusiasm under this manage-

ment, and yet there was no apparent fault. In some cases there was great success. Shareholders had 10 and 15 per cent. for their money, which, to a member who could invest £100, was a sensible profit to him. Nevertheless custom fell off, interest in the stores abated, and many were given up. If any solitary cogitator proposed to divide the profits on purchases, it was said, "What is the good of that? If there are profits made, they appear in the interest. You cannot increase them by varying the mode of paying them." Yet all the while this was the very thing that could be done. There lay concealed and unseen the principle of dividing profits on purchases which altered the whole future of Co-operation. We have traced the idea of it to Glasgow in 1822, to Meltham Mills in 1827,[1] to Rochdale in 1844, whence it has spread over the earth. One thing would strike most persons, that giving a profit to customers would increase them. No doubt others saw that under the interest on capital plan, that while the shareholders who could subscribe £100 might get £15, the poorer member who could only put in £1 obtained only 3s., yet the large shareholder who receives the £15 may not have been a purchaser at all, while the poor member, if he had a family, probably contributed £50 of capital to the business, if his purchases amounted to £1 per week, and the 2s. in the £ which on the average can be returned to purchasers now would give him £5 a year, besides his 5 per cent. interest on his capital. Thus it could be shown that the customer contributed more to the profits of the store than the capitalist. The purchaser, therefore, was taken into the partnership. Thus the mere form of distributing profits actually increased them. The interest of the purchaser revived: he became a propagandist. He brought in his neighbour. Business grew, profits augmented, and new vitality was infused into Co-operation. The vague principle that the producer of profit should have the profit, took a defined form, and he got it—and the purchaser was henceforth included in the participation of store gains.

[1] Mr. Walter Sanderson, of Galashiels, informs me (1876) that the principle was introduced into that town about the same time (1827) by Mr. William Sanderson (founder of the Building Society there) without any connection with Rochdale. Came it from Cambuslang? Mr. Walter Sanderson gives no details, but he is a responsible correspondent, and his word may be taken as to the fact.

Definitions grow as the horizon of experience expands. They are not inventions, but descriptions of the state of a question. No man sees everything at once. Had Christ foreseen the melancholy controversies over what he meant, which have since saddened the world, he would have written a book himself, and never have trusted the conditions of salvation to the incapable constructions and vague memories of illiterate followers. Foreseeing definitions, guiding Co-operation at successive points, would have been a great advantage, but it had to wait for them.

When it became clear that the purchaser must be taken into partnership as well as the capitalist, it did not occur to any one that Co-operation was not complete so long as the servants of the store were left out. If profits were to be shared by all who contributed to produce them, the servants of the store have their claim.

The conception of the co-operative principle in 1844 had assumed the following form: Co-operation is a scheme of shopkeeping for the working people, where no credit is given or received, where pure articles of just measure are sold at market prices, and the profits accumulated for the purchasers to create like advantage in the workshop.

It was not until twenty-four years later, namely, in 1868, that Rochdale attempted to extend the principle of Co-operation to manufactures. Their method of doing this was to divide profits with the workers. Those who had discovered that the interest of the purchaser was worth buying, were ready to admit that the interest of the workman was also worth buying. Clerks, managers, workmen, whoever in any capacity, high or low, were engaged in promoting the profits, were to be counted in the distribution. Twelve years more elapsed before any current definition of Co-operation contained the following addition: The main principle of Co-operation is that in all new enterprises, whether of trades or manufacture, the profits shall be distributed in equitable proportions among all engaged in creating it.[1]

At the Social Science Congress held in Edinburgh in 1867, I asked Professor Fawcett to take occasion in one of the Sections to define Co-operation as he conceived it, that we might be

[1] "Logic of Co-operation," lecture by the writer.

able to quote his authority in our societies. He did so in words which included labour as well as capital, in the division of profits.

The most comprehensive statement of Co-operation is that given by a master of definitions, and placed at the head of this chapter. It occurred in the first public speech Mr. John Stuart Mill was known to have made. A great Co-operative Tea Party, of members of co-operative societies in London, was held in the Old Crown and Anchor Hall, Strand, then known as the Whittington Club. Being acquainted with Mr. Mill, I solicited him to define the nature of Co-operation as he conceived it, for our guidance, and he did. "It is not Co-operation," he said, "where a few persons join for the purpose of making a profit by which only a portion of them benefit. Co-operation is where the whole of the produce is divided. What is wanted is that the whole working class should partake of the *profits of labour*."

Years elapsed before any official definition was attempted of Co-operation. The Co-operative Congress at Newcastle-on-Tyne (1873) agreed upon a floating definition of a co-operative society, stating that "any society should be regarded as co-operative which divided profits with labour, or trade, or both." Prior to this, I had taken some trouble to show that if the purchaser from a manufacturing society was to be placed on the same footing as the purchaser from a store, a similar extension of business and profits would be likely to arise in the workshop which had accrued at the store; and the cost of advertising and travellers and commissions would be greatly reduced. This led to a more comprehensive definition of the scope of co-operative principle which was thus expressed.

Co-operation is an industrial scheme for delivering the public from the conspiracy of capitalists, traders or manufacturers, who would make the labourer work for the least and the consumer pay the utmost, for whatever he needs of money, machines, or merchandise. Co-operation effects this deliverance by taking the workman and the customer into partnership in every form of business it devises.[1]

[1] "Logic of Co-operation." Confusion arises from capital being treated as a recipient of profit. There never will be clearness of view in Co-

All co-operators who have, as the Italians say, "eyes that can see a buffalo in the snow," will see the policy of counting the customer and the worker as an ally. Until this is done, Productive Co-operation will "wriggle" in the markets of competition, as Denner says in "Felix Holt," "like a worm that tries to walk on its tail." Co-operation consists—

1. Concert regulated by honesty, with a view to profit by economy.

2. Equitable distribution of profits among all concerned in creating them, whether by purchases, service in distribution, or by labour, or custom in manufactures.

Dr. Elder, in his work entitled "Topics of the Day," says: "The term Co-operation is restricted to organised combinations designed to relieve them of intermediates in productive industry. Co-operation is partnership in profits equitably distributed in proportion to the severalties of capital,[1] labour skill, and management."

There is an evolution in definitions, as in other things, which it is useful to trace. There is need of this, for principles like—

> "Truth can never be confirmed enough,
> Though doubts did ever sleep."

The main idea that should never be absent from the mind of a co-operator is that equity pays, and that the purchaser at the store and the worker in the workshop, mill, or field, or mine, or on the sea, should have a beneficial interest in what he is doing. A principle is a sign by which a movement is known, is a rule of action, and a pledge of policy to be pursued. To be a man of principle is to be known as a person having definite ideas, who sees his way and has chosen it, while others are confused he is clear. While others go round about he goes straight on. When others are in doubt he knows exactly what to do. But the majority are not of this quality. They see a principle for a short time and then lose sight of it. Some one may point out that the new paths lead to a place the very opposite of that they proposed to

operation until capital is counted as a trade charge—and when paid, done with. Labour by brain or hand is the sole claimant of profits.

[1] Dr. Elder follows the old idea of including "capital" in the "severalties" entitled to profit. Capital is entitled to payment but not profit.

reach. Having no clear discernment of the nature of principle, the unreflecting think one object as good as another, or better, if they see immediate advantage in it.

Co-partnery is not Co-operation. A co-partnery proceeds by hiring money and labour and excluding the labourer from participating in the profit made. English Co-operation never accepted even Louis Blanc's maxim of giving to each according to his wants, and of exacting from each according to his capacity. This points to the reorganisation of society. English Co-operation gives nothing to a man because he wants it, but because he earns it.

Where the interest of the purchaser is not recognised in the store—where the claim of the workman is not recognised in the production—there is no Co-operation ; and the assumption of the name is misleading. Distributive Co-operation which takes in the purchaser, and leaves out the servants of the store, is partial Co-operation. Productive Co-operation, which does not recognise the directors, managers, and workmen, is incomplete Co-operation.

When capital divides profits with shareholders only and as such, that is joint-stockism. It does not care for workers, except to use them—nor appeal to their sympathies, nor enlist their zeal, or character, or skill, or good will. And to do the joint-stock system justice it does not ask for them. It bargains for what it can get. It trusts to compelling as much service as answers its purpose. Even if by arrangement all the workmen are shareholders in a joint-stock company, this does not alter the principle. As workmen, because of their work, they get nothing. They are still, as workmen, mere instruments of capital. As shareholders they are more likely to promote the welfare of their company than otherwise ; but they do it as a matter of business rather than as a matter of principle. Joint-stock employers often do have regard for their men, and do more in many cases for their men than their men would have the sense to do for themselves. But all this comes in the form of a gift—as a charity—not as a right of labour.

If workmen had capital and held shares in enterprises in which they were engaged in labour, they would be merely a capitalist class, studying how to to get the most by the employ-

ment of others, how early to desert work themselves, and subsist upon the earnings of those to whom labour was still an obligation. What Co-operation proposes is that workmen should combine to manufacture and arrange to distribute profits among themselves, and among all of their own order whom they employ. By establishing the right of labour, as labour, to be counted as capital, by dividing profits on labour, they would give it dignity; they would appeal to the skill, good-will, to the utmost capacity and honest pride of a workman, and have a real claim upon him in these respects.

It is quite conceivable that many working men will yet, for a long time to come, prefer the present independent relation of master and servant. Many a man who has the fire of the savage in him, and whom civilisation has not taught how much more happiness can be commanded by considering the welfare of others than by considering only himself, prefers working on war terms, unfettered by any obligation. He has no sympathy to give, and he does not care that none is offered him. He would not reciprocate it if it were. He dislikes being bound, even by interest. Any binding is objectionable to him. Hate, malevolence, spite, and conspiracy are not evils to him. He rather likes them. His mode of action may bring evils and privation upon others; but he is not tender on these points; and if he be a man of ability in his trade he can get through life pretty well while health lasts, and enjoy insolent days.

The imputations heaped upon capital arise from workmen always seeing its claws when it has uncontrolled mastery. No animal known to Dr. Darwin has so curvilinear a back or nails so long and sharp as the capitalist cat. As the master of industry—unless in generous hands—capital bites very sharp. As the servant of industry it is the friend of the workman. Nobody decries capital in itself, except men with oil in their brains, which causes all their ideas to slip about, and never rest upon any fact. Capital is an assistant creator. It is selfish when it takes all the profits of the joint enterprise of money and labour. It is capable of buying up land and abruptly turning people off it—it is capable of buying up markets and making the people pay what it pleases; it is capable of shutting the doors of labour until men are starved into working on its own terms. Capital is like fire, or steam,

or electricity, a good friend but a bad master. Capital as a servant is a helpmate and co-operator. To limit his mastership he must be subjected to definite interest. This was the earliest device of co-operators, but its light has grown dim in many minds, and in many undertakings has never shone at all.

In Distributive Co-operation the interest of capital is counted as a trade charge to be paid before profits are counted; and in Productive Co-operation the same rule should be followed.

In England we do not apply the term co-operative to business in reference to the source of profit, but to the distribution of the profit. In a store, profit is not divided upon the amount of capital invested, but upon the amount of purchases by members. The purchasers are in the place of workers—they cause the profits and get them, while capital, a neutral agent, is paid a fixed interest and no more.

On the other hand, Productive Co-operation is an association of workers who unite to obtain profit by their labour, and who divide profit upon labour, just as in a store they are divided upon purchases. Mr. Roswell Fisher, of Montreal, presents the advantage of the principle of dividing profits upon labour in a clear form. It is this: The workmen should subscribe their own capital, or hire it at the rate at which it can be had in the money market, according to the risk of the business in which it is to be embarked: then assign to managers, foremen, and workmen the salaries they can command. Out of the gross earnings, wages, the hire of labour; the hire of capital; all materials, wear and tear, and expenses of all kinds are defrayed. The surplus is profit, and that profit is divided upon the labour according to its value. Thus, if the profits were 5 per cent., and the chief director has £10 a week, and a skilful workman £2, the director would take £50 of the profit, and the workmen £5. The capital, whether owned by the workmen or others, would have received its agreed payment, and would have no claim upon the profits of labour.

The ceaseless conflicts between capital and labour arise from capital not being content with the payment of its hire. When it has received interest according to its risk, and according to agreement, there should be an end of its claims. Labour then would regard capital as an agent which it must pay; but when

it has earned the wages of capital and paid them, labour ought to be done with capital. Capital can do nothing, can earn nothing, of itself; but employed by labour, the brains, and industry of workmen can make it productive. Capital has no brains, and makes no exertions. When capital has its interest its claims end. It is capital taking the profits earned by labour that produces conflict. In Co-operation labour does not consider profit made until capital is requited for its aid.

A distinguished French co-operative writer, M. Réclus, says, "Give the capitalist only one-third of the surplus profits, and the worker two-thirds." Mr. Hill replies, "In countries like India, wherein capital is comparatively scarce, it can and will command high terms in any agreement it may make with labour; whilst in North America, where *labour* is scarce, labour can and will command comparatively high terms in its agreement with capital. It would seem a monstrous violation of abstract principle that, whilst in order to earn fifty guineas a low-class agricultural labourer must work hard for two whole years, Jenny Lind should obtain such a sum for singing one single song! But so it is; and why—but that mere labourers are plentiful, whilst of Jenny Linds there is but one." [1] A Jenny Lind rate of interest must be given for it if it cannot be had without, but having got that it should not come up a second or third time for more.

Capitalists hired labour, paid its market price, and took all profits. Co-operative labour proposes to hire capital, pay it its market price, and itself take all profit. It is more reasonable and better for society and progress that men should own capital than that capital should own men.

[1] *Co-operator*, September, 1865.

CHAPTER XXI

DISTRIBUTION.—THE CO-OPERATIVE STORE

"Co-operation is the true goal of our industrial progress, the appointed means of rescuing the Labouring Class from dependence, dissipation, prodigality, and need, and establishing it on a basis of forecast, calculation, sobriety, and thrift, conducive at once to its material comfort, its intellectual culture, and moral elevation."—HORACE GREELEY, Founder of the *New York Tribune*.

SHOPS in most countries are confined to the sale of one, or a very few articles. Among artificers in metals work-rooms are called "workshops." In towns where articles, and provisions in portable quantities, are sold, they are called simply "shops." Where great varieties of goods are collected together for sale it is called a "Store." This American name was very early applied to co-operative shops, where articles of many kinds, groceries, garments, feet-gear, and goods of household use, were stored for sale. This is called Distributive Co-operation. The manufacture of articles for sale is called Productive Co-operation.

The earliest, humblest, and quaintest store founded in England, so far as my researches have gone, is that set up by the sagacious Bishop Barrington, one of George the Third's Bishops, who held the see of Durham at the end of the seventeenth century. At first sight it is not a recommendation to posterity to have been one of the Georgian Bishops. What did Walter Savage Landor say of the Georges? [1]

[1] Thackeray had devoted four lectures to the four Georges when Landor put their history into six lines and sent them to Mr. H. J Slack, who was then editor of the *Atlas* newspaper, in which they first appeared :—

"George the First was always reckoned
Vile—viler George the Second,
And what mortal ever heard
Any good of George the Third?
And when from earth the Fourth descended,
God be praised the Georges ended."

However, Bishop Barrington was a great favourite in Durham, and had fine qualities and gracious ways. When my inquiry for co-operative facts appeared in the *New York Tribune*, a correspondent, at the foot of the Alleghanies, sent me pages of an old magazine, which he had carried from England long years ago, with his household goods, containing, in large type, an "account of a village shop at Mongewell, in the county of Oxford, communicated by the Bishop of Durham." This humble provision store, with its scanty stock, its tottering pauper storekeeper, with his shilling a week salary, is a picture of the humblest beginning any great movement ever had. No doubt the Bishop was a good secular preacher. He certainly was a man of business, and showed perfect knowledge of the working of a store, and would make no bad manager of one in these days. He describes the condition of poor people in those times: their ignorance, their helplessness, their humility of expectation, and the economical and moral advantages of a co-operative store, as completely and briefly as they ever were described. I enrich these pages with the Bishop's words:—

"In the year 1794, a village shop was opened at Mongewell, in Oxfordshire, for the benefit of the poor of that and three small adjoining parishes. A quantity of such articles of consumption as they use was procured from the wholesale dealers as bacon, cheese, candles, soap, and salt, to be sold at prime cost, and for ready money. The bacon and cheese, being purchased in Gloucestershire, had the charge of carriage. This plan was adopted under the apparent inconvenience of not having a more proper person to sell the several commodities, than an infirm old man, unable to read or write. He received the articles that were wanted for the week; and it has appeared by his receipts at the close of it, that he has been correct. Since the commencement to the present time, there has been no reason to regret his want of scholarship: a proof how very easy it must be to procure, in every village, a person equal to the task. As he has parish pay, and his house-rent is discharged, he is perfectly contented with his salary of *one shilling per week*, having also the common benefit of the shop.

"As the prices of the shop articles have varied much during the past year (1796), it will be easy to judge of the advantage by taking them at the average, and the account will be more

simple. The price of the sale has been in the proportion stated, against the prices of the shops in the neighbourhood.

"The rate of bacon purchased, has been eightpence halfpenny per pound; the carriage rather more than a farthing. It was sold for ninepence farthing; the advantage to the poor was twopence three-farthings per pound. Cheese cost fourpence three-farthings; carriage more than a farthing; sold for sixpence: advantage to the poor, one penny per pound. Soap, candles, and salt, sold at prime cost: the advantage on these articles to the poor was one pound eleven shillings.

"There is a loss on the soap from cutting and keeping: to prevent which it is laid in by small quantities. Buying the salt by the bushel, almost covers the loss sustained from selling it by the pound.

"The quantity of bacon sold during the year was one hundred and sixty-eight score. Cheese twenty-eight hundred weight.

Account of payments in 1796.

Candles, soap, and salt	£31	1	6
Bacon	120	0	0
Cheese	62	9	5
Carriage	7	11	3
Salary	2	12	0
	£223	14	2

"The receipts corresponded, except by fifteen shillings: which arose from the poor of Mongewell having been allowed their soap and candles a penny per pound under prime cost. The saving to the poor was—

On bacon	£34	16	8
On cheese	11	13	4
On candles, &c.	1	11	0
	£48	1	0

"Hence it appears that the addition to the prime cost of bacon and cheese, is equal to the loss on the hocks and the

cutting. Every other part of the flitch being sold at the same price.

"Since the commencement of the present year (1797) rice and coarse sugar have been introduced into the Mongewell shop, with much benefit; particularly the former (rice).

"From the above statement it is seen that, taking all the articles together sold at the Mongewell shop, there was a saving to the poor of 21 per cent. in the supply of several of the most important articles of life. Many, in every parish, would lend their assistance to carry this plan into execution, if it were known that the *rates* would be lowered at the same time that the poor were benefited.

"From the adoption of this plan, the poor will have good weight, and articles of the best quality; which, without imputing dishonesty to the country shopkeeper, will not always be the case at a common shop. Where there is no power of rejection, it is not probable that much regard would be paid to these considerations by the seller.

"The comforts of the poor may thus be promoted, by bringing within their reach the articles of life which they chiefly want, of the best quality, and at the cheapest rate. Their morals will also be improved by the removal of an inducement to frequent the alehouse. The parish rates will be lessened, even if the articles were sold without profit; for the labourer will be enabled to purchase clothing for his family without other assistance.

"Another benefit of this measure is the preventing the poor running in debt. The credit given to them adds much to the sufferings they undergo from their situation. As the poor find that they can procure necessaries for their families by credit, they feel less scrupulous in spending part of their weekly wages at the alehouse. Hence the earnings of the following week are diminished, by having mis-spent their time as well as their money. There are but few parishes which do not confirm the truth of these observations; and which have not been called upon to redeem such goods of the poor, as the shopkeeper had at length seized, to cover himself from loss, and when he had no hopes of security from their labour."

It is impossible not to feel respect for the poor "infirm old" storekeeper—although "he could neither read nor write," his

"receipts were always correct," and if he wanted "scholarship" he did not want honesty. The reader will agree this is a very minute and remarkable account of the Village Shop. The grocers of the diocese must have been as angry at the promoters of the innovatory store as they have been since. There has been no Co-operative Bishop who has had more discernment of the subject, has taken such trouble to establish a store, or given so useful an account of it, as the Bishop of Durham.

The co-operative store which Mr. Owen established at New Lanark was very rudimentary, precisely such as we have in London under the name of Civil Service Stores. Knowing that the workpeople—as is the case everywhere with the poor—had to pay really high prices for very inferior articles, and could never depend upon their purity or just measure, he fitted up a store at New Lanark with the best provisions that could be obtained and sold them to his workpeople at cost price, with only such a slight addition as to pay the expenses of collecting and serving the goods. Some households (managers probably) with large families are said to have saved as much as ten shillings a week through buying at Mr. Owen's store. After a time he added to the cost and distributing price a sum for educational purposes, and thus he laid the foundation of that wise plan for applying a portion of profit to the education of the members and their families. Mr. Owen afterwards appropriated a portion of his manufacturing profits to the improvement of the dwellings of the workpeople, and the instruction of their families. On one occasion, when his partners came down from London to inspect his proceedings, they found so many things to approve and so much profit made, they presented him with a piece of plate. Mr. Owen had incurred an expenditure of £5,000 for new schools. They had no belief that intelligence would pay. Mr. Owen was entirely of the opposite conviction, and though he did not make his workpeople sharers in the profits of the factory, in the form of paying them dividends, he made them participators in the profits by the ample provision he made for their education, their profit, their pleasure, and their health.

"Before completing this history I visited New Lanark, to look upon the mills erected on the falls of the Clyde by Sir Richard Arkwright and David Dale, now more than one

hundred years ago, and made famous by Robert Owen. Though I had often heard him speak of what he had done there, and had examined several accounts given by his son, the Honourable Robert Dale Owen, I never conceived the high esteem for him which I felt when I saw with my own eyes what he had accomplished. I thought the schoolrooms, of which so much was said, were some unused rooms in the mill and were entered by a hole in the wall—being, as I knew, commodious, but, as I supposed, mean and tame and cheap in construction. Whereas I found the schoolhouse a separate structure, built of stone, vast and stately with handsome portico supported by four stone pillars. There are three schoolrooms on the ground floor, which will each hold 600 or 700 people. Above are two lecture halls, lofty and well lighted; one would hold 800; another, with a gallery all round it, would hold 2,000 people. The reading-desk (and the stairs to it) from which Mr. Owen first announced his celebrated scheme for the reconstruction of the world; the handsome triangular lights, still bright, which used to hang from the ceiling, and the quaint apparatus for the magic lantern, are there still; and in another building, built by him for a dancing-room for the young people, are stored numerous blackboards, on which are painted musical scales and countless objects in various departments of nature. There are also very many canvas diagrams, some of immense dimensions, which are well and brightly painted, as was Mr. Owen's wont, by the best artists he could procure. They must have cost him a considerable sum of money. Time, neglect, and 'decay's effacing fingers' have rendered them but a wreck of what they were, but they are still perfect enough to show the state in which Object Teaching was when it was first invented. Mr. Owen knew Fellenberg and Froebel, and carried out their ideas with the opulent ardour with which he conceived them, years before they found opportunity of carrying them out themselves. My purpose in mentioning these things is that the South Kensington or other Museum may hear of them. Most of the diagrams are capable of being restored, and are numerous enough to make an exhibition in themselves, and would be of great interest to the new generation of teachers in any town in which they could be seen. The Messrs.

Walkers, who now own the mills, and who have preserved this famous collection of school furniture, may be willing to transfer them to some public museum. It is now (1878) nearly sixty years since they were first used, and their existence has long been unknown to teachers. Dr. Lyon Playfair is in America, or I would ask him to interest himself about them. Probably Professor Hodgson, of Edinburgh University, would—he being near them, and being one who cares for the traditions of education. It matters little in what museum the relics in question may be placed, provided they are preserved from loss."[1]

On kicking away the layers of mortar which had fallen from the ceiling of the great lecture hall, to make sure that the floor was safe to tread upon, I found underneath diagrams which had been walked over until they were in tatters. It was thus I was led to inquire whether any others existed. Mr. Bright had just then asked whether the ruins of the mills of Manchester would one day mark the extinction of commerce, as the ruins of Tantallon Castle marked the extinction of the feudal system. I thought as I walked through the deserted lecture hall of New Lanark, that I was treading amid the ruins of education.

So late as 1863 a store existed in London exactly in the condition to which they had degenerated when their social purpose had ceased, conducted merely as a joint-stock shop. At that time Mr. Ebenezer Edger joined with me in endeavouring to organise a union of the scattered Co-operative Societies of the Metropolis. Our circular was sent to one whose address was 30, Ion Square, Hackney Road, N. Mr. Chas. Clarke, the Manager, sent the following reply: "Our association cannot be classed exactly amongst Co-operative Stores, so we have no interest to publish our affairs, as we won't have *anybody* in with us. As for Directors *we are very particular*. I am sole Manager of all, and intend to keep so. Any who join us can make a small fortune, but must obey my instructions, but we are independent of any who wish to join, we keep in working order with our present number."

Mr. Clarke did not favour us with the method whereby

[1] Letter to the *Times*, by G. J. Holyoake, November 13, 1877, inserted under the head of "Educational Archæology."

"each member joining his store could make a small fortune." Had he made it known and it proved satisfactory, so valuable a manager would never have been left to waste his abilities in Ion Square.

Dr. Angus Smith has stated that London has in it nineteen climates. Every town has several different climates and several entirely different classes of people—quite distinct races, if regard be had to their minds and ways of living. No one supposed that the men of Rochdale would carry Co-operation forward as they did. The men of Liverpool knew more about it. The men of Birmingham had more of its inspiration and traditions, and more advocates and leaders of Co-operation in it than any other town. Manchester had more experience of it. Leeds had more energy among its men. Sheffield had more spirit and individual determination. Scotland had seen its foundations laid in their midst, and two communities had been started among them. Yet Rochdale, from whom no one expected anything, eventually did everything. In England there is more business enterprise than in Germany, yet Schulze-Delitsch has overrun the land with Credit Banks for lending money to persons who would put it into trade or commerce, while in this country it has never entered into the heart of any human being, unless it be Dr. Hardwicke, to imagine that any person might profit in like manner.[1]

The difference between German and English Co-operation is this: the German co-operator sets up Credit Banks, the English co-operator sets up Stores. The Germans lend money, the Englishman makes it. The way in which it was done was explained by Dr. Watts. "A well-conducted co-operative store can offer a workman 7½ per cent. rise on his wages, and that without a strike or struggle. I had before me in March of 1861 returns from sixty-five co-operative stores, and I found their average dividends showed a profit of 7½ per cent., which is one shilling and sixpence in the pound. My own pass-book shows that I paid on November 3rd (1860) £1 to become a member. I have paid nothing since, and I am now (1872) credited with £3 16s. 6d., nearly 300 per cent. on my capital in a single year. Of course that arises from my

[1] Since then Mr. Henry W. Wolff has introduced the system into this country and published an important book on "Credit Banks."

purchases having been large in proportion to my investment." [1]

Dr. Watts pointed out how singular a thing it is that "the poorest people have the most servants. The poor man has to pay the importer, the wholesale dealer, the retail dealer, and often the huckster. These are all his servants; they all do work for him and they have to be paid; so the very poorest man who wants to become richer has only to drop his servants."

A modern co-operative store generally obtains success by five things:—

1. Intelligent discontent at being compelled to buy bad articles at a high price.

2. By opening a small, low-rented clean shop, and selling good goods at honest measure and at average prices.

3. By increasing the cheapness of goods bought by concert of custom. The more money can be taken into the market, the further it goes in purchasing; the large custom diminishes the cost of management.

4. By buying from the Wholesale Society, stock can be obtained from the best markets at the lowest rates and of good quality. It is by *continuity of quality* that the prosperity of a store is established.

5. By capitalising the first profits carried to the credit of the members until they amount to £5. By this means the first hundred members supply a capital of £500.

Leicester, which King Lear founded before his daughters were disagreeable, and which had a Mint in the year 978, did not at first supply its store with sufficient capital, the members subscribing but £1 or £2 each. The result was that the store was pale in the face through financial inanition. If the society had a physician it would have been ordered an appropriate increase of financial diet immediately. Pale-faced stores are starved stores; and when young have rickets.

The store must be fed with capital, the weekly official paper of the movement must be fed with subscribers, the heads of the members must be filled with ideas. If a store have not sufficient capital for its business it has the ghostly look of a disembodied thing. Wise members take in the Journal which represents the cause of the stores and the workshop.

[1] Lecture, Mechanics' Institution, Manchester, November, 1861.

In commencing a store, the first thing to do is for two or three persons to call a meeting of those likely to join. In this world two or three persons always do everything. Certainly, a few persons are at the bottom of every improvement, initiating it and urging it on. Capital for the store is usually provided by each person putting down his or her name for as much as each may be able—towards payment of five shares of one pound each. If the store is to be a small one, a hundred members subscribing a one or two-pound share each will enable a beginning to be made. It is safest for the members to subscribe their own capital. Interest has to be paid upon borrowed money often before any profits are made. Sometimes the lenders become alarmed, and call their loans in suddenly, which commonly breaks up the store, or directors have to become guarantees for its payment, and then the control of the store necessarily falls into their hands. By commencing upon the system of the intending co-operators subscribing their own capital, a larger number of members are obtained, and all have personal interest in the store, and give it their custom.

A secretary should be appointed, and a treasurer; and two or three nimble-footed, good-tempered, willing fellows named as collectors, who shall go round to the members, and bring into the treasury their subscriptions. Some place should be chosen where members can pay them. Some will have the right feeling, good sense, and punctuality to go, or send, and pay their money unasked. But these are always few. Many will think they do quite enough to subscribe, without being at trouble to do it. Considering, as Dr. Isaac Watts says, that "the mind is the standard of the man," it is astonishing how few people "know their own minds," and how many have to be fined to bring it to their recollection that they have "minds." Numbers of well-meaning working men can only pay at a certain time in each week, and if the collector does not catch them then, they cannot pay that week at all, for their money is gone. The collectors of store funds require to be men of practical sense, capable of infinite trouble and patience. Ungrudging praise is due to whoever undertakes this work. They are the real founders of the store.

At first, wholesale dealers were shy of co-operators, and would not sell to them, and the societies bought at a dis-

advantage in consequence. Before long friendly dealers arose, who treated them on fair terms. Mr. Woodin, of London, Mr. J. McKenzie, of Glasgow, tea merchants, Messrs. Constable and Henderson, of London, wholesale sugar dealers, Messrs. Ward & Co., of Leeds, provision merchants, were examples of tradesmen of the kind described. A wholesale agency now exists in Manchester, which keeps buyers who understand what to buy and where to buy it. This Wholesale Society[1] enables a young society to offer at once to its customers goods of quality, so that the poorest residents of Shoreditch or Bethnal Green could buy food as pure and rich as though they were purchasers at Fortnum and Mason's in Piccadilly—in fact, obtain West End provisions at East End prices. Dishonesty among co-operators is very rare, and it is sufficiently provided against by guarantees. When servants are appointed, they should never be distrusted on rumour, or conjecture, or hearsay, or suspicion. Nothing but the clearly ascertained fact of wrong-doing should be acted upon as against them. If every society took as much trouble to find out whether it has good servants as it does to find out whether it has bad ones, many societies would flourish that now fail. As Mr. J. S. Mill said to the London co-operators, whom he addressed at the Whittington Club, "Next to the misfortune to a society of having bad servants, is to have good servants and not to know it." Talleyrand used to say to his agents, "Beware of zeal," which leads men into indiscretions. But if earnestness without zeal can be got, success is certain. A true co-operator has three qualities — good sense, good temper, and good will. Most people have one or the other quality, but a true co-operator has all three: "good sense," to dispose him to make the most of his means; "good temper," to enable him to associate with others; "good will," to incline him to serve others, and be at trouble to serve them, and to go on serving them, whether they are grateful or not in return, caring only to know that he does good, and finding it a sufficient reward to see that others are benefited through his unsolicited, unthanked, unrequited exertions. Sooner or later —generally later—they will be appreciated.

[1] There is a branch of the Wholesale at 99, Leman Street, London; and one in Newcastle-on-Tyne.

In a properly-constituted store, the funds are disposed of quarterly or half-yearly in six ways. (1) Expenses of management; (2) interest due on loans; (3) 10 per cent. of the value of the fixed stock, set apart to cover wear and tear;[1] (4) dividends on subscribed capital of the members; (5) 2½ per cent. of the remaining profit to be applied to educational purposes; (6) the residue, and that only, is then divided among all the persons employed and members of the store in proportion to the amount of their wages and of their purchases, varying from 1s. 6d. to 2s. 6d. in the pound.

Co-operators have known how to keep accounts. Dr. Watts, being the manager of an insurance society which guarantees the integrity of persons in responsible situations, bears this testimony: "I have had to do with a considerable number of them professionally, having had to guarantee the honesty of the managers, which has enabled me, when I see any fault in the accounts, to insist upon it being rectified; and I can say that the balance-sheets of co-operative societies, as a rule, would be a credit to any public accountant. There is no single thing hidden; you may trace the whole of the society's operations through the figures of the quarterly report." Co-operators also manage their affairs very peacefully, for though I, the writer, have been appointed arbitrator to many societies, I have never been called upon to adjudicate upon any difference, save twice in thirty years. Other arbitrators have also reason to complain of want of business.

It is not pretended that Co-operation is a special solvent of scoundrelism, only that it diminishes the temptations to it. The dealer, the order-getter, and travelling agent of commercial firms are often the corruptors of store-keepers and store-managers. Some few years ago a manufacturer of a class of articles in general demand in stores, endeavoured to do business with them. Being a man of honesty himself, his agents made no offer of commission or any gift to store-keepers, and he soon found that he could not do business with them worthy

[1] Mr. Willis Knowles, an experienced co-operator, says that the store at Hyde finds it most profitable to extinguish the fixed stock charge as early as possible—making the fund set aside for depreciations large for this purpose; for whatever value is put upon unredeemed and fixed stock has to receive interest which is equivalent to a rent charge. This being cleared off allows a larger dividend to be paid to members.

of his attention. He succeeded for a time, but ere long orders fell off, or complaints were made without reason. It was within my knowledge that the goods offered in this case were really pure. The manufacturer, for there were not many competitors in his business, knew that orders were given by the stores to the firms that could not supply goods equal to his in quality and cheapness. At the same time I knew of cases in another part of the country where Co-operation was better understood which was creditable to store-keepers. There was a dealer in London known to me who would corrupt any one he could for trade, and who did not care who knew it. His doctrine was the common one that if he did not do it some rival would—an argument by which any knave might justify himself in pocket-picking. This villainous logician was a man of respectability, punctual in the payment of pew rents. He showed me a letter he had had from Jay Giggles, a well-known store-keeper in the North. Any one would think the name fictitious who did not know what extraordinary names co-operators have.[1] Giggles had given an order to the house in question, and for reasons of his own, sent afterwards this note:—

"Sir,—Perhaps it is right to inform you that I do not ask, nor expect, nor take any gift from your traveller, to whom I have given orders; I therefore expect to have good goods sent me. I may not find it out very soon if they are not what I am promised by your traveller, but I shall before long make the discovery, or somebody will for me, and then you will have no more orders. I do not pretend to be such a very virtuous person; but my directors give me a good salary that I may not be tempted to seek gifts. I am therefore bound to do the best I can for them. If I do not, I shall be found out, and I shall lose my place.

"Jay Giggles."[2]

[1] Robert Owen's first employer at Stamford was named McGuffog. A manufacturer with whom he had early relations, was a Mr. Oldknow.

[2] The man's name was Giggles. His mother being an admirer of the Rev. Mr. Jay, of Bath, whom she had heard in her time, would have her son named Jay—rather an absurd union. Any one who passes to-day near the Hyde Park entrance in Brompton Road may read in large letters over the door, the name Tagus Shout. Never was there before such a wide-mouthed name for a moneychanger. Co-operators are not alone singular in their names. There was until lately a firm of auctioneers in Kensington trading under the name of Giddy and Giddy.

"Ah," said the dealer in his prompt and unabashed way, turning to his traveller, who was just up in town, "Here's a a letter from J. G. Jay may have the Giggles, but there is no giggling about Jay."

The local habits of purchasers make a considerable difference in the cost of managing a store. In some towns purchasers will walk great distances to buy at a store. In another place members will expect four ounces of salt butter to be sent them. In many towns customers will wait in numbers to be served in the order of their arrival. In other towns customers want to be served at once, and will go into any shop rather than wait long at the counter of the store. In these cases, the directors are compelled to provide more counter-men than are really needed, in order that customers may be quickly served. The impetuosity, or impatience, of members puts a large store to expense or loss, it may be of several hundred pounds, which another society in the next town saves. No grocers could be persuaded that the day would come when co-operative societies would raise their prices and increase their profits. Yet this continually occurs; grocers' profit, and the outside public are taxed by co-operative stores. The public, however, can protect themselves by joining the stores. As soon as the dividends on purchases at a store rise higher than the average ordinarily attained, it generally means that higher charges for goods are made by the directors of the store than is charged by shopkeepers in the neighbourhood. As soon as the astute shopkeeper becomes aware of this, he is enabled to raise his prices in proportion. All this is clear gain to him, and he owes this gain to the store.

Any person engaged in promoting stores may obtain information and various publications upon the subject by writing to the General Secretary, Co-operative Union, Long Millgate, Manchester. Among them is one by Mr. Walter Morrison, entitled "Village Co-operative Stores," which contains exactly those practical and familiar suggestions which everybody who belongs to a co-operative store, or desires to promote the establishment of one, would like to have at hand to consult. Besides, Mr. Morrison gives a much-wanted and practical list of the "Description of the Goods," their weight, price, and quantity which a store should begin with; nor does he omit

those higher considerations which make Co-operation worth caring for and worth promoting.

One of the best accounts, next to that of the Bishop of Durham, of the formation and career of a country store was given some time ago by Lord Ducie in the *Times*. It is a complete story of a store, and would make a perfect co-operative tract. This store was commenced on Lord Ducie's property at Tortworth, Gloucestershire, in March, 1867. It was conducted on the "Northern" store plan. The villagers were all in debt to the shops, from which the stores soon freed them. Lord Ducie says, "The moral action of the store thus becomes of great value, encouraging a virtue which precept alone has long failed to promote. The shareholders at the end of the first year were as follows:—Labourers, 25; carpenters and masons, 11; tradesmen, 9; farmers, 6; gardeners, 6; clergy, gentlemen, and domestic servants, and various occupations, 16. Large purchases have been made by non-shareholders, receiving only half profits. The sales were: For the first quarter, £320; second, £349; third, £468; fourth, £511. The dividends to shareholders have been, on purchases: For the first quarter, 3s. 4d.; second, 2s. 9d.; third, 3s. 2d.; fourth, 3s. 6d. For various reasons, the dividends will not in future range higher than 3s. in the pound. The accounts at the end of the year of three labourers who joined at the commencement were:—

	Paid-up Capital.	Dividend on Money Expended.
A	£1 0 0	£5 0 7
B	1 14 10	2 10 0
C	0 19 3	3 17 0

Those men earn 12s. each per week; the difference in the amount of their dividends arises from the different amounts expended by each. A, for instance, has a large family, some of whom add to the family income; his purchases have been large, and the result is a dividend which much more than pays the rent of his house and garden. These men have also received 5 per cent. upon their paid-up capital. The first year of the store ended, the committee ventured upon a drapery branch, having expended £230 in stocking it. They have determined to pay their salesmen 2½ per cent. upon sales in

lieu of a fixed salary, and have secured the whole of their time. They have also decided to pay committeemen 6d. each for every attendance, a humble extravagance which will contrast favourably with the practice of more ambitious institutions."

Of the success of these societies a thousand anecdotes might be related. In these pages the reader will meet with many. One is told by Mr. Alderman Livesey, of Rochdale: "A poor labouring man, owing about £15 to his grocer for provisions, resolved to join a co-operative society. He called upon the grocer and announced his intention to leave the shop. The grocer was of course indignant. The debtor, however, remarked that he was quite prepared to pay his debt by such weekly or monthly instalments as the judge of the county court might direct, and he was willing to do it without the expense and trouble of a legal process. Ultimately the grocer consented to this arrangement. The man kept his promise, the grocer was in due course paid off; profits accumulated in the co-operative society, and he is now the owner of the house he lives in, and is also the owner of another property which he values very highly—a county vote."

The rule of the co-operators to give no credit and take none, saves them the expense of book-keeping, and enables many poor men to escape the slavery of debt themselves. The credit system existed in the Halifax Society until May, 1861, to the extent of two-thirds of the amount of paid-up capital by each member; the confusion, trouble, waste of time, vexation, and moral harm was great. When some Lord Chancellor does what Lord Westbury attempted, abolishes small credits altogether among the people, the poor will become grateful enough and rich enough to put up a statue to his memory in every town.

The normal condition of a workman who is not a co-operator, is to be in debt. Whatever his wages are, he has a book at the grocer's, and he is a fortnight behind the world. If any one benevolently cleared him of debt and gave him a week's money to pay his way with, he would never rest till he was in debt again. The power of saving is an act of intelligence, and Co-operation has imparted it. By its aid 10,000 families in some great towns have acquired this profitable habit. Even if members dealing at a store really paid more for an article than

at a grocer's, that surplus cost, as well as the entire profit made, are paid back to them. It is merely a sort of indirect method for increasing their savings, which otherwise they would not make.

Cobbett used to advise a young man before he married, to observe how his intended wife employed herself in her own family, and unless she was thrifty and a good hand at household duties not to have her. Had Cobbett lived to these days he would have advised young men to give the preference to a girl who belonged to a co-operative store. A young woman who has learned never to go into debt, but to buy with money in hand and save some of the profit at the store, is literally worth her weight in gold. Many a gentleman would save £500 or £1,000 a year had he married a co-operative girl. In many parts of the country now, no sensible young woman will marry a man who does not belong to a store.[1]

At the Leicester Congress, 1877, 20,000 copies of a clever little statement were circulated, which will suffice to explain to the most cursory reader what advantages a good co-operative store may confer upon a town.

"1. It makes it possible for working men to obtain pure food at fair market prices!

"2. It teaches the advantage of cash payments over credit!

"3. It gives men a knowledge of business they could not otherwise obtain!

"4. It enables them to carry on a trade of one hundred and sixty thousand a year!

"5. It makes them joint proprietors of freehold property worth upwards of twenty thousand pounds!

"6. It secures them an annual net profit of sixteen thousand pounds!

"7. It raises many a man's wages two or three shillings per week without a strike!

"8. It alleviates more distress than any other social organisation!" [2]

During the year 1875–6 the Leicester Society divided

[1] See "History of Halifax Society."

[2] The parliamentary return of co-operative societies (1877) obtained by Mr. Cowen, M.P., shows that there were upwards of 12,000 societies then.

amongst its members, as dividend, upwards of £23,000, in addition to several thousands added to the members' share capital.

"Practical" people deride sentiment, but they would not be able to make a penny were it not for "sentimental" people, who have in perilous days bleached with their bones the highway on which the "practical" man walks in selfish safety. People would not save money, much as they need it, did not "sentimental" people make it convenient and pleasant for them.

Some societies are obliged to pass resolutions compelling members to withdraw £10,000 or £20,000 of surplus capital accumulating. It was the original intention of the founders of early stores to start manufactories which might yield them higher dividends than the store paid. In some towns of enterprise this has been done, and building societies, boot and shoe works, spinning mills, cloth factories, have been undertaken. Stores have been discontinued, or remained stationary because the members had no faculty for employing their savings. Some societies have failed, not because they were poor, but because they were too rich, and working men, whose despairing complaint was that they had no capital, have lived to be possessors of more capital than they knew what to do with, and have been compelled to draw it out of the society because they had no capacity for employing it productively. Men who at one time thought it a sin to pay interest for money have lived to regret that they can find no means of obtaining interest for theirs. Many men who complain of capitalists taking interest become the sharpest dividend hunters anywhere to be found, and think of nothing else, and sacrifice education and reasonable enjoyment to the silliness of needless accumulation.

Thieves did not understand their opportunity when stores began. For many years gold might have been captured in quantities at many co-operative stores. Between the time of its accumulation and its being lodged in the bank, quantities might have been stolen with impunity. I have seen a thousand sovereigns lying in a bucket, under a cashier's table—which a clever thief might have carried away. But sharper management, the purchase of good safes, the rapid transit of the cash

to the bank, have taken away these chances. At one store, the cashier used to carry a few hundred pounds to the cottage of the treasurer at night when he thought of it; and the treasurer, the next day—if he did not forget it—would take it to the bank. But the fact that the law had begun to prosecute peculators intimidated the thieves, and the general honesty of co-operators afforded security where carelessness prevailed. I remember a secretary of the Oddfellows who was brought before the magistrates in Manchester for stealing £4,600 from the funds, and he was dismissed, as the law then permitted members of a Provident Society to rob it. Very few robberies of co-operative societies have taken place since the law afforded them protection. In 1875 the Hyde Society was robbed of £1,100. In London, the secretary of a Co-operative Printing Society made away with £2,000, and the magistrates dismissed the charge, for no reason that we could discover, unless he thought co-operators ought to be robbed as a warning to them not to interfere with the business of shopkeepers. But, as a general rule, it is not safe now to rob co-operators, and it commonly proves a very unpleasant thing for any charged with such offence. J. C. Farn, who recorded very valuable experience he had both in the illegal and legal period of Co-operation, gave instances. "I have been instrumental in placing persons in co-operative stores, and they have in bygone days plundered almost with impunity. The following cases which I have reported for newspapers will show the state of the law as it was and is. The deciding magistrates were Mr. Trafford at Salford, and Mr. Walker at Manchester:—Applicant: We want a summons. Mr. Trafford: What for? To compel the trustees of a co-operative society to divide the money they have among the shareholders.—Mr. Trafford: Was the society enrolled? No.—Did you take security from those who held the property on the basis of an individual transaction? No.—I can't help you, and I would not if I could. You first form an illegal society, you bungle in the management, and then you want me to help you out of the mess; and, as though this was not enough, you let the Statute of Limitations cover everything. No summons can be granted.' The second case was as follows:—This man, your worship, is charged with embezzling the funds of a co-operative

society.—Mr. Walker : Is it enrolled ? Yes.—Where is a copy of the enrolment ? Here.—Very well. Who is here authorised by the society to prosecute ? I am, your honour, said a person in court.—Go on.—He did go on, and the man was committed. So much for co-operative law in 1853 and 1863."

Stores are in some cases dreary places, and there is often more pleasure in looking into a well-arranged shop window than into a store-window. The taste and ingenuity with which shop-windows are set out certainly give life and interest to the streets. The streets of some cities, which are now brilliant with every art, product, and industry, would look like a prolonged poorhouse, if they were filled with Civil Service and ordinary co-operative stores. The act of purchasing is in itself a pleasure. The dainty association under which a beautiful thing is first seen adds to the delight of possessing it, and the delight is worth paying for. So long as taste and art are unextinguished, the higher class of shop-keeping will endure. The lower class of shops, of cleanliness, simplicity, and articles of honest make, have always been frequented with pleasure and always will. The purchaser of prepared food feels under a personal obligation to the vendor who sells him what is savoury and cleanly made, and what he can eat without misgiving. Mere vulgar shopkeeping, which ministers only to coarseness and cheapness, which lowers the taste of every purchaser, or prevents him acquiring any, and furnishes a means of selling articles which ought never to be made, is but a demoralising business. Such shops were well superseded by real co-operative stores. Co-operative stores improve taste so far as honesty and quality go, but its humble members cannot be all expected to have simple and true taste, which might exist among the poor in degree as well as among the rich. It is seen in the jewels of an Italian peasant, in the dress of a French girl, and in the homes and handi-crafts of working people of many nations. Lectures upon the art of choosing products, why they should be selected in preference to others, in what state consumed, or worn, will no doubt be one day fully associated with co-operative stores.

The Corn Society's New Mill, Weir Street, Rochdale,

according to the engraving which represents it, which I published at the Fleet Street House, twenty or more years ago, is the most melancholy mill that ever made a dividend. Dark, thick, murky clouds surround it, and the sky-line is as grim as the ridges of a coffin. The white glass of the plain front meets the eye like the ghost of a disembodied mill. A dreary waggon, carrying bags of corn, guided by drivers that look like mutes, is making its way through a cold Siberian defile. The builder might have made it pleasant to the eye, with as little expense as he made it ugly. But in those days nobody thought of comeliness, seemliness, or pleasantness in structures, in which men would work all their lives. The really pleasant part about the corn mill was in the minds of the gallant co-operators who set it going, and kept it going. But grimness is gradually changing for the better. Some of the Oldham mills put up under co-operative inspiration are places of some taste, and in some cases of architectural beauty, with towers making a cheerful sky-line without, and spacious windows making the workrooms lightsome within. The old bare-bones view of economy is dying out. It has come to be perceived that it is ugliness which is dear, and beauty which is cheap.

A few years ago there appeared in *Reynolds' Newspaper* a series of letters signed "Unitas," advising the formation of a "National Industrial Provident Society," of which, when the prospectuses appeared, William Watkins was named as the secretary. The object appeared to be to establish co-operative stores, to retain the profits due to the members, and convert them into paid-up premiums in self-devised insurance societies, guaranteeing endowments, superannuation allowances, and other benefits. The plan was ingenious and attractive, and no doubt might be worked as a new feature of co-operation, which would spread the system in many quarters. The idea of persons being able to provide payments in sickness, or loss of employment; and, if the fund to their credit was not exhausted in this way, to secure a sum at death, or a fixed income at a certain age, by simply buying their provisions at a certain store, is both feasible and alluring. This scheme made great progress in Wales. I felt bound to oppose it, but with considerable regret. Its frustration was ascribed to me, and I was

threatened with an action for libel on the part of the proprietor of the paper in which the scheme originated. The plan required to be conducted by persons of known character and substance of the nature of security, and business capacity. If it succeeded to any extent, the profits of the members would be in possession of a comparatively unknown committee of men living in the metropolis. In their hands also would be vested the property of all these stores. The provisioning of these stores from a central agency would be entirely under their control, and the rates of charges, the quality of provisions, and the funds would be practically unchecked by the subscribers. At the same time there is no doubt that in the hands of known, responsible, and able men of commercial resource and business organisation, a comprehensive scheme of this kind of Co-operative Insurance would have great popularity, great success, and do a great amount of good, and make Co-operation a matter of household interest in a way not yet thought of by the great body of co-operators.

Since Co-operation means that everybody concerned has an interest in doing what he ought to do, the directors of the store, the secretary, the manager of it, all persons engaged in serving it, should have an interest in performing their duties, as well as they were able. It is not good for business when no one has a permanent motive for service and civility. If few persons come to a counter, the better it is for the shopman, who has no interest in them. He will repel or neglect all he can. A shopman having an intelligent interest in the purchasers, and friendly to them, makes custom at the store a personal pleasure as well as profit. For all to be respectful and pleasant to each other is no mean part of the art of association which co-operators have to cultivate. Personal courtesy, which is never neglectful, never inconsiderate, diffuses more pleasure through the life of a town than the splendour of wealth, or the glory of pageants. They are seen but for an hour, while the civilities and kindnesses of daily intercourse fill up the larger life, and convert its monotony into gladness.

The earlier stores were a sort of Board School of co-operators. Co-operative education began there ; and as the majority of all co-operators were themselves or their families in daily inter-

course with the store, that was the place where useful information was diffused, and the greatest number of good impressions given. That is where co-operative literature can be sold, where news of all that concerns members can be posted up, that is where the stranger looks in to see what is going on. Everything should be clean there, and the brass work bright, and every article that can be shown, without deterioration, displayed with taste. The pleasure of seeing and selecting is half the pleasure of buying. Knowledge of the nature and varieties of pure provisions, taste in colours, patterns and texture of garments is a part of education in man or woman, and shows the quality of their individual character. Wise shopmen, therefore, who understand what business service means, and who have interest in its success, are as important agents in their places as directors or managers. Servers should be carefully chosen, treated well, and have a clear interest in the success and popularity of the store. It is in their power to make the store repellent or popular. Those who hesitate to give them good wages and a dividend upon them, the same as that accruing to purchasers, do not understand what may be got out of good servants. Those who render service in Co-operation have influence. The server is in a position of equality. I purposely write Server instead of Servant, because servant is understood to imply meniality; while a server is one who obliges.

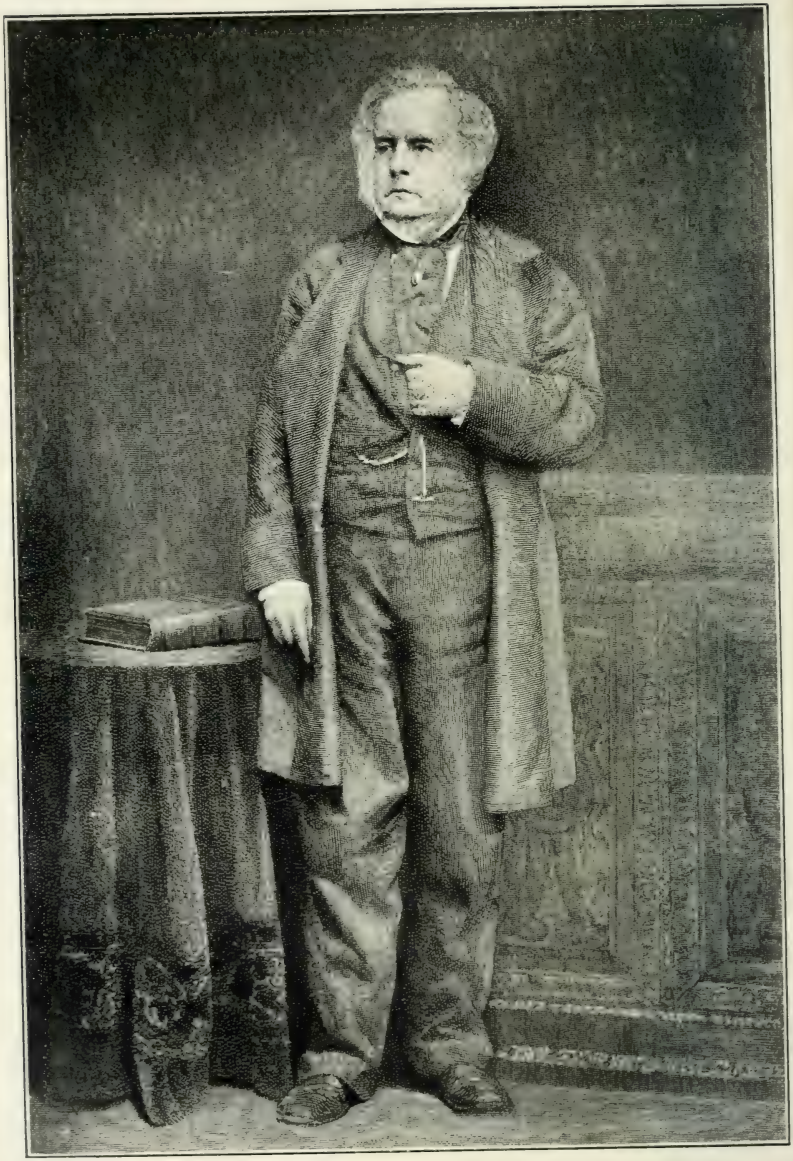
Societies do not always consider sufficiently the qualities of those whom they appoint directors. They often elect those who talk well instead of those who think well. Sometimes a person coarse-minded, harsh and abrupt, unceremonious in dealing with officers of the store under him, will harden them into indifference to the welfare of the store, and be unpleasant to purchasers. A member of fluency and ambition will be very flattering in quarterly meetings, and win repute for most agreeable qualities until he gets an appointment, who has himself no sense of personal courtesy, and will be very offensive to others over whom he has power. Courtesy, where a man has his own way, and to all who can help him to it, may co-exist in the same person who is at the same time insolent to any who have independence of spirit, and who may withstand him. There never was a tyrant deservedly execrated by a

nation who had not a crowd of followers ready to testify to his humanity and amiability. Tennyson in his drama, warns Harold how he should comport himself towards the Duke of Normandy, in whose power he is, and who is only gracious to those who lend themselves to his ends.

> "Obey him, speak him fair,
> For he is only debonair to those
> That follow where he leads, but stark as death
> To those that cross him."[1]

[1] "Harold," by Alfred Tennyson.

END OF VOLUME I.



Yours truly
John Bright.

CHAPTER XXII

CO-OPERATIVE WORKSHOPS[1]

"*Chi ha un compagno ha un padrone.*"—ITALIAN PROVERB.
("He who has a partner has a master.")

INDUSTRIAL Co-operation includes not merely union for strength, but union for participation in the profits made in concert, but the theory has not always been applied consistently to the workshop.

In a store the purchasers share the total profits. In a proper productive society, after the payment of all expenses of wages, of capital, material, rent, education, and reserve fund—the total profits are divisible among the thinkers and workers who have made them, according to the value of their labour estimated by their respective salaries, and to customers according to their purchases.

The members of manufacturing societies in some cases prove themselves wanting in patience and generosity towards their comrades. The smarter sort, perceiving that a successful trade may speedily produce large profits, prefer converting the co-operative affair into a joint-stock one, and keeping the gains in their own hands, taking their chance of hiring labour like other employers. Thus, instead of the mastership of two or three, they introduce the system of a hundred masters.[2] They multiply organisations for individuals, and enlarge the field of strikes, and prepare new ground for contests between capital and labour.

[1] This chapter treats the workshop as a co-operative company in which labour hires capital, devises its own arrangements, and works for its own hand.

[2] See "Perils of Co-operation—the Hundred Master System," contributed by the present writer to the *Morning Star* newspaper.

The theory of a co-operative workshop is this. Workmen provide all the capital they can as security to capitalists from whom they may need to borrow more, if their own is insufficient. Nobody is very anxious to lend money to those who have none: and if any do lend it, they seek a higher interest than otherwise they would. The workmen hire, or buy, or build their premises; engage whatever officers they require, at the ordinary salaries such persons can command in the market. Every workman employed is paid wages in the same way. The interest on the capital they borrow, and that subscribed by their own members for rent, materials, wages, business outlays of all kinds, for reserve fund, for depreciation, for education, are the annual costs of their undertaking. All gain beyond that is profit, which is divided among all officers, workmen, and customers. Thus in lucky years when 20 per cent. profit is made a manager whose salary is £500 gets £100 additional—a workman whose wages are £100 a year takes £20 profit, in addition to the interest paid him for his proportion of capital in the concern. There is no second division of profit on capital—the workers take all surplus, and thus the highest exertions of those who by labour, of brain or hand, create the profit are secured, because they reap all the advantage.

The workman has of course to understand that a co-operative workshop is a Labour co-partnery, and to take note of the Italian proverb that "he who has a partner has a master." He knows it is true when he takes a wife, and if he does not consult in a reasonable way the interests of home, things soon go wrong there. And so it will be in the workshop. All his fellows are partners, all have a right to his best services, and he has a right to theirs, and he who neglects his duties or relaxes his care, or skill, or exertions, or makes waste, or loss, or shows neglect, or connives at it, is a traitor and ought to be put out of the concern.

There has been confusion caused by there being no clear conception of the place of capital, which has been allowed to steal like the serpent of Eden from the outer world into the garden of partnership, where, like the glistening intruder of old, it has brought workmen to a knowledge of good and evil—chiefly evil: and times beyond number the serpent of

capital has caused the original inhabitants to be turned out of Eden altogether. Hence has come discouragement to others, and that uncertainty which rob enterprises of their native fire and purpose.

Co-operation has a principle which is distinctive, and those who ignore it have no right to the distinctive name of co-operators, and are trading under a false name. Labour Co-partnership demands that the worker shall put his skill and character into his work and shall be secured an equitable share of the profits. The joint-stock system uses the labourer, but does not recognise him. At best it invites him to join the capitalist class as a shareholder, in which case he looks for profit, not from his labour, but from the labour of others. Under the joint-stock plan labour is still a hired instrument—labour is still dependent, without dignity, because without rights.

The condition of the working tailors of the metropolis, then 23,000 in number, appeared, from the description in the *Morning Chronicle*, to be so deplorable and so unjust, that several gentlemen, with Prof. Maurice, Mr. E. V. Neale, Canon Kingsley, J. M. Ludlow, and Thomas Hughes, attempted to rescue them from such wretchedness, and, if possible, supersede the slop-sellers. For this purpose they subscribed £300, rented some suitable premises, and fairly started in business a body of operative tailors, numbering some thirty, under the management of a person who was a tailor and a Chartist. The manager was absolute master until the Association repaid the capital advanced to it. He received a salary of £2 a week, the other members worked by the piece, according to a fixed tariff of prices. All work was done on the premises. Interest at the rate of 4 per cent. only was paid on the capital lent. One-third of the net profits was by common agreement devoted to the extension of the Association, the remainder was to be divided among the workmen in the ratio of their earnings, or otherwise applied to their common benefit. The plan was fairly co-operative. Here capital took a very moderate interest for its risk. The manager "went wrong." A manager of energy, good faith, and good capacity might have made an industrial mark under these well-devised conditions.

Printers, who are the wisest of workmen, as a rule, are not yet infallible in co-operation. The Manchester Co-operative Printing Society has this rule for the distribution of profits. "The net profits of all business carried on by the society, after paying for or providing for expenses of management, interest on loan capital, and 10 per cent. per annum for depreciation of fixed stock and buildings, and paying $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.[1] per annum (should the profits permit) on paid-up share capital, shall be divided into three equal parts, viz., *one to capital, one to labour, and one to the customer*." Were the capital all supplied by the workers the double profit to capital would come to them. But in this society none are shareholders, and therefore labour works to pay capital twice before it gets paid once. Yet this society is in advance of "co-operative" productive societies, as that of Mitchell Hey, for instance, at Rochdale, which gives nothing to labour. Mitchell Hey, however, does admit individual shareholders, giving them profit on their capital, but not on their labour. In the Manchester Printing Society the capital is subscribed by stores, and individual members have no opportunity of investing in it. But in proper co-operative societies where capital is simply a charge, and paid separately, and paid only once—the division of the profits in proportion of two-thirds to labour, and one-third to custom, gives labour a large interest and a fair chance.

Among the higher class of masters a responsible servant is adequately provided for; they give a salary which secures the whole of his interest and powers, and they commonly tolerate his prosperity so long as they are well served. The working class are apt to fix all salaries at the workshop rate, and begrudge every sixpence over that. For a man's brains, devotion, interest, and experience, they award nothing willingly, and make it so humiliating to receive anything extra, that he who does so eventually accepts employment elsewhere.

Workmen who have known want, who have risen from small beginnings, through struggles and privations, are pecuniarily timid. They are always afraid their means will

[1] The effect of the high interest they have to pay is that the printers get only sixpence in the £ on their wages.

fail them. Workmen who have risen from nothing may like to see others rise, but they expect and rather like to see them rise through the same process. Working-class masters should set an example to other employers. It is only a liberal frame of mind among men that can make a co-operative workshop possible.

Sometimes a committee of a co-operative society find open government more troublesome than secret. Sometimes their manager would be able to show them that great advantages had been obtained if he was not fettered by the obligation of explaining how he acquired them. As a rule persons will do things in secret which they would never think of doing openly. In a co-operative productive society in London, it transpired that a person in the office was paid by a private firm to give it timely notice of all estimates of tender sent by the co-operators. It came to pass continually that a lesser tender was made by the rival firm, and the co-operators lost the work. Had the private firm been co-operative and the workmen been acquainted with this treachery it could not have succeeded long, and probably would not have been attempted. A co-operative society would seldom be got to vote secret service money for unknown application. The publicity which co-operative policy implies and compels is one of its beneficial influences in the conduct of trade. Honesty is a fetter, but it is a noble obligation. The secrecy and promptitude of individual action is often the source of honest profit. Responsible directors are delegated considerable power. This is practically acting as private firms do, with this difference, that in Co-operation nothing can be done which those who do it, do not feel themselves able to explain and justify to the whole society at the proper time. This is a restriction upon enterprise as understood in the competitive world. But it tells in favour of the morality of trade. We have seen at repeated Congresses directors of the Wholesale Society complain of the publicity of criticism brought to bear upon their proceedings. At the Annual Congress criticisms arise upon the officers of the Central Board, upon the character of the investments of the Wholesale Banking Department, and of the sufficiency of the reserve fund which many consider ought to be provided for the security of the Bank. The equality of

members, the appointment of all officers by representative election, the eligibility of all members to the highest offices when their fitness is discerned by the society, are essential features recognised in the constructive period. It is intended that all members shall acquire the capacity of conducting their own affairs. Co-operative workshops are the great means by which hired labour can be superseded.

Writers of business experience and commercial authority give useful suggestions to working men. Here is a passage: "The extensive trial of the system of co-operation in its different forms would tend to the correction of the present exaggerated ideas of the working classes respecting the profits of employers, and their disposition to under-estimate the value of the contribution of capital and skill which these furnish. Experience would show them that losses are frequent and inevitable, that it is easy to lose money and difficult to make it, and that the rate of net profit is not, in cases of only ordinary good management, very high. They would learn that the employer . . . contributes to the process of production, an element of intellectual labour, on which the efficiency of their manual labour depends." [1]

Manchester Commissioners, who visited the Emperor Napoleon respecting the Cobden Treaty, explained that the average profit of the cotton trade was 12½ per cent. on the capital employed. And the balance sheets of the Cotton Spinning Companies of the Oldham District, Dr. Watts says, confirm the statement. The best known of the modern crowd of Spinning Mills which have sprung up in Oldham is the Sun Mill, which commenced in 1861. It originated with the co-operators, members of the Distributive stores there, conjointly with a few trade unionists, with a share capital of £50,000 and a loan capital of a similar amount. They soon set 80,000 spindles to work. In 1874 their share capital amounted to £75,000, the whole of which, within £200, was subscribed. In addition to this, it has a loan capital of £75,000. The entire plant may be estimated at £123,000. The mill has always been depreciated 2½ per cent. per annum, and the machinery at 7½. The total amount allowed for depreciation during the first ten years of the company's existence has been

[1] Charles Morrison, "Labour and Capital," pp. 134–5.

£32,000. The profits declared have been very large, varying from 2 to 40 per cent. Most of the Oldham mills have declared a rate of profit which seems very high. But as their loan capital is large and is paid only 5 per cent., the high profits are counted from dividends paid upon the share capital alone.

It has been ostentatiously held that Distributive stores could never succeed without one absolute directing mind. Yet numbers of stores have been successfully conducted by directors, chosen in what appeared to be the worst manner—that of public election—where those who made the most speeches got the most votes. Yet it has come about that men of business faculty are generally brought to the front. Now the same objectors say, this plan may do well for such a simple affair as distribution, but in productive manufactures nothing can be done without the presiding and commanding mind. Distribution is not at all a simple affair; a few errors will suffice to ruin a store of ten thousand members, and it requires great capacity to plan distribution on a large scale, to watch at once the fluctuations of a hundred markets and consult the personal tastes and interest of a million families, as now has to be done. Joint-stock companies are successfully conducted by working men, who surmount the difficulties of manufacturing management heretofore declared to be insurmountable. Sometimes employers who establish partnerships of industry will be discouraged by the apathy and selfishness of their men, who will be willing to take profits without exerting themselves to create them. Sometimes men will be discouraged and deprived of advantages they are entitled to have, by impatience or injustice on the part of employers. But new experiments increase, and the number which succeed increase.

The commercial sentiment of Co-operation is not philanthropy but equity. Charity is always a grace in business men, but many persons would be glad to see it eliminated. The demand of people of spirit and insight is justice, not charity: for if justice were oftener done there would be less need of charity to redress inequality of condition.

Good-will is a virtue. Masters may show it to servants, the rich to the poor—but masters do not use it towards one another; the rich do not ask for the good-will of the poor. They prefer not to require it. It is not wanted between equals.

Courtesy, cordiality, deference, and respect are the virtues of intercourse. Co-operation seeks to supersede good-will by establishing good conditions which establish it in practice.

The names of Mr. Slaney's Committee of 1850 which first inquired into the laws affecting the finances of the industrial classes deserves recording.

The Select Committee originally consisted of the following members: Mr. Slaney, Mr. John Abel Smith, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. Cardwell, Mr. Greene, Mr. Ewart, Lord James Stuart, Mr. Wilson-Patten, Lord Nugent, Mr. Stafford, Sir R. Ferguson, Mr. Littleton, Mr. J. Ellis, and Mr. Frederick Peel; to whom Mr. Heald and Mr. Stansfeld were added in place of Mr. Wilson-Patten and Mr. Stafford. Mr. John Stuart Mill gave evidence on this Committee. In speaking of the remuneration of capital, and the mistaken notions which he believed to prevail among the working classes in regard to it, Mr. Mill dwelt upon "the extravagant proportion of the whole produce which goes now to mere distributors," as at the bottom of the greater part of the complaints made by the workers against their employers. In answer to the question whether this evil would not cure itself by competition among the distributors, Mr. Mill replied that "he believed the effect of competition would be rather to alter the distribution of the share among the class who now get it, than to reduce the amount so distributed among them." But no one dreamt that large bodies of working men would arise who would combine to use the savings on their own consumption, not to employ themselves, but to employ other working men to work for them, that they might put the profits in their own pockets.[1] This has been done in Oldham with fervour. In the fertile field of Oldham co-operative production is unknown. Mr. William Nuttall, a man of ability and energy as an industrial agitator, developed quite a passion for joint-stock companies there.

In Oldham, joint-stock companies do not give workmen, as workmen, a chance. A town without the co-operative instinct of equity is not favourable to the enfranchisement of labour. Mr. Joseph Croucher, writing from the Royal Gardens, Kew, related that a gentleman once told him that he was stopping at an hotel, and noticing the waiter (a Yorkshire-

[1] *Co-operative News*, December 16, 1876, art. by Mr. E. V. Neale.

man) to be a sharp fellow, he asked him how long he had been in the place. "Eighteen years, sir," was the answer. "Eighteen years!" said the gentleman; "I wonder you are not the proprietor yourself!" "Oh," said the waiter, "my master is a Yorkshireman also."[1] Wit may outwit wit: equity alone gives others a chance.

The joint-stock theory of Oldham is that if every inhabitant becomes a shareholder in some company, the profit of the whole industry of the district will be shared by everybody in it —which is what Co-operation aims at. This scheme requires everybody to join in it, which never happens. But if this universal joint-stock shareholding really results in the same equitable distribution of profits as Co-operation seeks to bring about, why not put these aims in force in every mill? Co-operation works for the common benefit. The joint-stock system works for private ends and not for labour.

Some examples of the diversity in the division of profits in co-operative societies will be of the nature of information to the reader.

The rules of the Brampton Bryan Co-operative Farming Society, promoted by Mr. Walter Morrison, order that every person employed as an officer or labourer shall be paid such sum of money that neither exceed one-tenth part of the net profits, nor one-sixth part of the salary or wages earned by such officer or labourer during the year. The rules of this society are all through remarkably clear and brief, and are model rules for co-operative farming.

The Agricultural and Horticultural Co-operative Association, of 92, Long Acre, London, limits its interest upon capital to 7½ per cent. It takes no second interest, but returns the balance of profit to the purchasing shareholders.

The East London Provident and Industrial Society set apart 2½ per cent. profits for an educational fund, and a portion of the profits may be applied to any purpose conducive to the health, instruction, recreation, or comfort of the members and their families, which may include lectures and excursions.

The Hawick Co-operative Hosiery Company, 1873, divide such portions of the net profits, or such portion as may be agreed on at the quarterly meeting, equally between capital

[1] *Co-operator*, March 28, 1868.

and labour, at so much per £ on share capital, and so much per £ on wages received by the worker. The profit rule of this society has one merit, that of not containing the word "bonus," but it pays capital twice.

The Manchester Spinning and Manufacturing Company, 1860, permits net profits to be equally divided upon capital and wages at so much in the £, payable to all workers who have been a full half-year employed, others have such sum placed to the credit of each workman, until he by purchase or otherwise holds five shares in the company, the rest is paid to the worker. These rules recognise capital as an equal participator with labour.

The Union Land and Building Society of Manchester has a special rule on the marriage of female members. Any married woman, or any woman about to be married, may be a member in accordance with, and subject to, the provisions of section 5 of the Married Women's Property Act of 1870, and such female member may apply in writing to the committee pursuant to provision 5 of the aforesaid Act, to have her shares entered in the books of the society in her name as a married woman, as being intended for her separate use. If she omits this notice, the shares would be accredited to the husband. The profits of this society are divided equally between labour and capital. Capital is a creature with an impudent face, and as Elliot said of Communism, always "hath yearnings for an equal division of unequal earnings."

The Cobden Mills Company proposed to distribute half profits arising over 10 per cent. interest to capital, among the officers, clerks, overlookers, weavers, and other persons in the employment of the company, in proportion to the wages or amount of salary received. If any invention or improved process be placed at the disposal of the company, by any one in its employment, the value of it is taken into account in fixing the amount of profit to be given to him. But the remaining half of such clear net profit over and above 10 per cent. is to be divided between the members of the company in proportion to the respective amount belonging to them in the paid-up capital of the company.[1]

[1] I held two hundred shares in this company, the first money I ever had to invest, and never received a penny of interest, or the principal.

In the "Co-operator's Hand-book" it is provided in the 60th clause, which relates to "Bonus on Capital," that "Capital (having received its interest) shall *further* be entitled to a bonus consisting of all surplus of the dividends from time to time, apportioned therein *beyond the interest due.*"[1] This being the doctrine of the Hand-book of 1855, the first Hand-book issued, no wonder confusion as to the claims of capital long existed in the co-operative mind. Mr. Neale and his coadjutors the Christian Socialists, made no claim of this kind with regard to their own capital. It was put in the Hand-book under the belief that capital could not be obtained for productive enterprises without the allurement of this extra remuneration. This has contributed to the slow and precarious career of co-operative manufacturing. The allurement was needed for workmen, instead of which it was accorded to capital. It was enthusiasm among workmen that was wanted to be called out by prospect of gain. Had it been so encouraged, large sums of capital subscribed in the prospect of double interest would never have been lost, as it often has been, through the indifference and torpidity of workmen. Had the second interest been secured to the men, the capitalist had seldom lost his first.[2]

The rules of the Hebden Bridge Fustian Co-operative Society, 1873, after paying 7½ per cent. on paid-up shares, divide profits at an equal rate per £ between labour and purchasers. This is a workman's society.

In the division of profits prescribed in the Hand-book published by the Co-operative Board, 1874, the surplus which exists after payment of all charges legally incurred, is to be divided equally between purchasers and workers.

The problem is, can there be a division of profits between labour and trade which shall content the worker, and accord to the consumer that proportion which shall secure his custom, which may largely supersede the cost of advertisements,

[1] Page 28.

[2] "Major Cartwright, the reformer, served in his youth in the Royal Navy, which took him into various parts of the world, and among others into the Mediterranean Sea, when we were at war with the Turks. Greece being part of Turkey, our cruisers had to give chase to Greek merchant vessels, but they rarely if ever made a capture. Cartwright was curious to ascertain the cause; and after observation and inquiry, he attributed it to the fact that, according to the custom of the Greeks, every one of the crew, from the captain to his cabin-boy, had a share in the vessel" (Letter by Matthew Davenport Hill, *Co-operator*, No. 41, July, 1863).

travellers, commissions, and other outlays incidental to ordinary business?

The consumer, it is said, has "no more right to share in them than has the man who goes to an inn, is fed and lodged there and pays his reckoning and never dreams of a share in the profits made by the landlord." Nevertheless, if advantage accrued to the landlord of increase and certainty of custom by concession to the traveller, it would be worth his while to make it. It is not a question of right, but of policy.

Those who advocate the recognition of the purchaser in production as in distribution, do so on the ground that it will pay, as it has done in the store.

Three things are necessary to production—labour, capital, and custom. Capital and labour would have a poor time of it were it not for the consumers who pay for their product. Of these three, why should custom alone be left out? All the while the customer can be as active as any one if he has a motive. He can point out what he wants, give orders, or bring or procure them from others. In fact, he can make it worth the while of any producing society to recognise him.

To select as a rule cheap things rather than good things is immoral. Any purchaser of humane feeling would rather feel sure that those who made his goods were not ground down in wages, but had been fairly paid. As well buy off a murderer as buy from a manufacturer who murders his workers through excess of business capacity. If there be not a spot of blood on the article when you place it in your room, there is a spot of murder on the mind content to profit by it. Canon Charles Kingsley fixed for ever a stain upon willing or careless buyers of "cheap clothes and nasty."

If the co-operative workshop is to succeed like the store, it must pray for men of the type of Caleb Garth, with whose portraiture George Eliot has enriched industrial literature.

"Caleb Garth often shook his head in meditation on the value, the indispensable might of that myriad-headed, myriad-handed labour by which the social body is fed, clothed, and

housed. The echoes of the great hammer where roof or keel were a-making, the signal-shouts of the workmen, the war of the furnace, the thunder and plash of the engine, were a sublime music to him; the felling and lading of timber, and the huge trunk vibrating star-like in the distance along the highway, the crane at work on the wharf, the piled-up produce in warehouses, the precision and variety of muscular effort wherever exact work had to be turned out—all these sights of his youth had acted on him as poetry without the aid of the poets, had made a philosophy for him without the aid of philosophers, a religion without the aid of theology.

"I think his virtual divinities were good *practical schemes*, *accurate work*, and the *faithful completion of undertakings:* his prince of darkness was a *slack workman*. But there was no spirit of denial in Caleb, and the world seemed so wondrous to him that he was ready to accept any number of systems, like any number of firmaments, if they did not obviously interfere with the best land-drainage, solid building, correct measuring, and judicious boring (for coal)." [1] If the myriad of craftsmen share in the advantage of their skill, how much nobler is the spectacle they present!

Pothier, in his *Treatise on the Law of Partners*, defines partners as "a society formed for obtaining honest profits," a definition which would tell against a good many partnerships of very respectable pretensions. There is a charm in any plan that has a moral element in it, and if the element be what the lead miners call a "lode," or the colliers a "thick seam," or iron masters a "bed cropping out on the surface," so much the better. If, however, the moral element be merely like one of Euclid's lines, having length but not breadth, it is not worth public attention, and human interest in it takes the form of a mathematical point which has position but no parts. But if it has in it a palpable equitable element, recognising the right of the artificer to ultimate competence, the interest in such a workshop has all the dimensions of solid satisfaction.

[1] "Middlemarch."

CHAPTER XXIII

THE WHOLESALE SOCIETY

"In the moral world there is nothing impossible, if we bring a thorough will to it. Man can do everything with himself, but he must not attempt to do too much with others."—W. HUMBOLDT.

EVERYBODY understands the natural history of discovery. Some one proposes to do something which it is thought will be useful. It is at once declared to be absurd; then it is found out that if it was done it would be dangerous; next it is proved impossible, and that it was never done before, and it would have been done if it had been possible. Nevertheless the proposers of the new thing persist that it can be done. They come then to be designated by the disagreeable names of "fanatics," impracticables, spoliators, incendiaries, visionaries, doctrinaires, dreamers, and, generally, troublesome and pestiferous persons. It is surmised that they are probably of very bad morals, unsound in theology, and certainly ignorant of the first principles of political economy. At length they succeed. Their plan is then found to be eminently useful, very desirable, and the source of profits and advantages to all concerned. Then it is suddenly discovered that there never was anything new in it—that it had always been known—that it is all as old as the hills, and the valleys too—that it was recorded from the day history began, and, doubtless, before. Those who reviled it, and distrusted it, now find out that they always believed in it; and those who oppressed and denied it now become aware that it was they who suggested it—that they were the originators of it, and they who bore all the obloquy and opposition of carrying it through, had really nothing to do

with it. Something like this is the history of the Co-operative Wholesale Buying Society of Manchester, which is a federation of stores for the wholesale purchase and distribution of commodities for store sale.

When co-operative societies first began to multiply on the Sussex coast, the idea of organising arrangements for buying first took form. Dr. King was chief promoter of a plan for this purpose. Lady Noel Byron contributed £300 to enable it to be carried into effect. My townsman, Mr. William Pare, of Birmingham, was an advocate of a plan of this nature for twenty years before it occupied the attention of Promoters of Working Men's Associations in London, who were the first to practically advance it.

The first official mention of a Co-operative Wholesale Society dates as far back as 1832. The idea was started at the first Manchester Conference, when it was thought that £500 would be sufficient to set it going, and one was established at Liverpool which bore the name of the North-West of England United Co-operative Company, its object being to enable the societies to purchase their goods under more advantageous terms. Mr. Craig relates that at a bazaar held in the Royal Exchange, Liverpool, the rent of which was contributed by Lady Noel Byron, delegates attended who brought goods which had been manufactured by co-operators, and a large exchange was effected. There were linens from Barnsley, prints from Birkacre, stuffs from Halifax, shoes from Kendal, cutlery from Sheffield, and lace from Leicestershire. One society had £400 worth of woollen goods, another had £200 of cutlery. Some of the delegates were nearly entirely clad in clothes made by co-operators. The Wigan Society had the possession of a farm, for which they paid £600 a year.

But it was in Rochdale that the idea was destined to take root and grow and be transplanted to Manchester. A mile and half or more from Oldham, in a low-lying uncheerful spot, there existed, twenty years ago, a ramshackle building known as Jumbo Farm. A shrewd co-operator who held it, Mr. Boothman, had observed in the Shudehill Market, Manchester, that it was great stupidity for five or six buyers of co-operative stores to meet there and buy against

each other and put up prices, and he invited a number of them and others to meet at Jumbo Farm on Sundays, and discuss the Wholesale idea; and on Saturday nights at the Oldham store at King Street, a curious visitor might have observed a solid and ponderous load of succulent joints well accompanied, a stout cheese being conspicuous, for Sunday consumption, during the Wholesale discussion; for the hearty co-operators at Jumbo had appetites as well as ideas. Unaware what efforts had preceded theirs, they came to imagine that they also devised the Wholesale. It was another mind earlier occupied than theirs in attention to it, which had matured a working conception of it.

Jumbo Farm is nearly effaced or built over now. It had a dreary, commonplace look when I last saw it. Though I do not believe, as certain old frequenters of that jaggling spot do, that the gravitation, the circulation of the blood, and Queen Cassiopia's chair were first discovered there, I respect it because useful discussions were held there under Mr. Boothman's occupancy; and I was glad to hear from Mr. Marcroft authentic particulars how the joints got there on the good days of debate, when co-operators were "feeling their way"—and, what showed their good sense, eating their way too; for lean reformers seldom hit upon fat discoveries. There were and still are two great stores in Oldham—Greenacres and King Street. Greenacres has never carried out Sunday gatherings on any occasion. King Street Co-operative Society has done so for over twenty-five years, and many of their best and most successful projects have first been talked of at these Sunday meetings. That society has probably the largest number of members who are ever trying to get new light to better understand what is possible and immediately practicable. The members have no dogmatic opinions as to religion or politics, but are prepared to hear all men, and change action when duty and interest lead, reverencing the old and accepting the new. For all this, as well as for its interest in the commissariat of Jumbo, King Street shall be held in honour among stores! The *Christian Socialist* periodical, of 1852, published an account of a conference held in Manchester, when Mr. Smithies, of Rochdale, was appointed one of a committee, of which

Mr. L. Jones was also a member, to take steps for establishing a general depôt in Manchester for supplying the store with groceries and provisions. At that time Mr. L. Jones drew up a plan,[1] which contained the elementary ideas of an organised depôt so far as experience then indicated them. Thus the idea had from the beginning been in the air. Costly attempts were made to localise it in London in 1850. A few years later Rochdale conducted a wholesale department in connection with its store for the supply of Lancashire and Yorkshire. But it became apparent that the increasing stores of the country could never be supplied adequately by a department of any store, and that Rochdale having co-operated with the Wholesale Society in London, devised and carried forward a working plan suited to the needs and means of the stores in Lancashire and Yorkshire. They trimmed the lamp afresh, and for some ten years they kept it burning: its light enabling other pioneer co-operators to see their way to founding a new, separate, and more comprehensive society, which came to bear the name of the North of England Wholesale. Mr. Crabtree was on the committee of the Wholesale in 1865, the same year in which Mr. Nuttall first joined it. Mr. Crabtree recalls a series of public facts which prove that by all contemporaries best acquainted with the subject, Mr. Abraham Greenwood, of Rochdale, was the chief founder of the Wholesale.[2] Mr. Crabtree sets forth that "in the *Co-operator* for March, 1863 (vol. 3), Mr. Greenwood propounded his plan for a Wholesale Agency, which, with some modifications, formed the basis of their organisation." Mr. Nuttall's paper, read at the London Congress, in 1869, makes reference to the efforts of 1856, and shows that its promoters failed to agree as to the best means of raising the capital. Particulars of this are given on page 39 in the Congress Report, and on page 40 Mr. Nuttall gives credit to Mr. Greenwood for having proposed a plan which was ultimately adopted. Instead of charging a commission upon goods bought, they charged for their goods a price which covered the commission, and was intended only to be sufficient to cover expenses incurred.

[1] *Co-operative News*, May 12, 1877.
[2] Part II.—"History of the Equitable Pioneers."

The Wholesale scheme in its inception and careful steps for carrying it out in 1864, is a good example of the constructive co-operators' methods. Thrice the attempt had been made, thrice it had discouragingly failed. More than thirty years had intervened since the project was first launched. It had been lost like a ship at sea, but had not foundered, and was heard of again. Again and again it went out of sight and record, and again reappeared. Mr. Greenwood examined the vessel, found its sailing powers were all right, but it was sent out to coasts where no business could be done, and consequently could not keep up a working crew, and the ship could never get back to port without assistance.

The reader knows from public report what the expenses usually are of promoting and establishing an insurance or other company. Many might think that the magical "twopence," out of which Rochdale finance arose, would be insufficient here, but the actual levy fell very much below, as the following circular, sent to each society by Mr. William Cooper when the Wholesale was resolved on, will show :—

"At a conference of delegates from industrial and provident co-operative societies, held at the King Street Stores meeting-room, Oldham, on December 25, 1862, it was resolved :—'That all co-operative societies be requested to contribute one farthing per member, to meet the expenses that may arise.' The purposes for which the money is required are—to meet the expenses of the committee in carrying out the resolutions of the Conference, viz. :—To remedy a few defects of the Act of 1862 in the present session of Parliament ; to prepare plans for a central agency and wholesale depôt ; and consider plans for insurance, assurance, and guarantee, in connection with the co-operative societies. Therefore your society is respectfully solicited for the above contribution of one farthing per member."[1]

This Wholesale tax, when it was gathered in, would have

[1] In the minutes of October 9, 1864, it is recorded that "in future no commission will be charged on goods sold." The reason of this was that the knowledge of prices which the system of charging a commission disclosed, enabled buyers to take advantage of the Wholesale. The Society itself has gone on the lines originally marked out for it (Letter to Author by Mr. James Crabtree, 1886).

been of small avail had not strong and clear proofs of advantage been drawn up and presented to the confederators. The benefits calculated by Mr. Greenwood as likely to arise (and which have been realised) he foretold as follows :—

"1st. Stores are enabled, through the agency, to purchase more economically than heretofore, by reaching the best markets.

"2nd. Small stores and new stores are at once put in a good position, by being placed directly (through the agency) in the best markets, thus enabling them to sell as cheap as any first-class shopkeeper.

"3rd. As all stores have the benefit of the best markets, by means of the agency, it follows that dividends paid by stores must be more equal than heretofore ; and, by the same means, dividends considerably augmented.

"4th. Stores, especially large ones, are able to carry on their businesses with less capital. Large stores will not, as now, be necessitated, in order to reach the minimum prices of the markets, to purchase goods they do not require for the immediate supply of their members.

"5th. Stores are able to command the services of a good buyer, and will thus save a large amount of labour and expense, by one purchaser buying for some 150 stores ; while the whole amount of blundering in purchasing at the commencement of a co-operative store is obviated."

Never was a great movement created by clearer arguments or a smaller subscription. The Wholesale began at a bad time, when the cotton famine prevailed, and the first half-year it lost money, but the second half-year its directors contrived to clear off the loss, and pay a dividend of 12s. 6d. per cent. With an average capital of £2,000, and working expenses amounting to £267, the company transacted business to the amount of £46,000. The economy of capital and labour thus achieved was unprecedented, and a proof of the power and advantage of the ready-money rule. Such were the results accomplished by the Farthing Federation in 1864.

Within twelve months, Lord Brougham (than whom none knew better how to appreciate the significance of such a step) spoke of it as one "which, in its consequence, would promote Co-operation to a degree almost incalculable." When

Mr. Horace Greeley was last in England, he inquired of me, as was his wont, with Cobbett-like keenness, as to the progress of Co-operation. From information he received from others also he wrote an account of the Wholesale in the *New York Tribune*, in which he confirmed Lord Brougham's estimation of its importance.

Scotland has a Wholesale Society of its own, which is situated in Glasgow. The Manchester Wholesale was solicited to establish a branch there, but ultimately the Scottish co-operators established one themselves. In 1873 the new warehouse of the Scottish Wholesale Society, a large commanding building, was opened in the Paisley Road, Glasgow. Mr. Alexander James Meldrum was the President, and James Borrowman, Manager. The first year of the Scottish Wholesale Society they did business to the amount of £81,000. In the fifth year £380,000. Their capital the first year was £5,000, in the fifth £37,000. Their total divisible profit, exclusive of interest, exceeded £18,000 in the first five years.

In 1863, Ellen Mason, writing from Whitfield Rectory, remarked that "a Wholesale Depôt at Newcastle would be an immense boon to us." Many years later the appeal was listened to, as was also an application made in London, where a branch was established at 118, Minories,[1] with great advantage to the Southern stores. In 1865 an application was made from New South Wales to the Wholesale, to consider whether the Co-operative Society of Sydney could not purchase through it.

Its method of business is: With the first order a remittance must be enclosed sufficient to cover the value of the goods. Future accounts must be paid on receipt of invoice, or within seven days from the date; but if not paid within fourteen days no more goods will be supplied until such overdue accounts are paid.

The shares, which were £5 each, were issued on condition that a society took out one for each ten members belonging to it, increasing the number annually as its members increase.[2]

The progress of the Wholesale during fourteen years from

[1] It has since built imposing premises of its own at 99, Leman Street, Whitechapel.

[2] This rule is now altered to £1 for each member.

1864 to 1877 the following table tells. The figures are taken from the Rochdale Pioneers' Almanac of 1878 :—

Year.	No. of Members in Societies which are Shareholders.	£5 shares taken up.	Capital, Share, and Loan.	Value of Goods Sold.	Net Profit.
			£	£	£
1864	18,337		2,456	51,858	267
1865	24,005		7,182	120,755	1,859
1866	31,030		10,936	175,420	2,310
1867	57,443		24,208	255,779	3,452
1868	74,494		28,148	381,464	4,925
1869	77,686		37,785	469,171	3,584
1870	87,854		43,950	653,608	6,818
1871	114,184	5,821	49,202	727,737	8,038
1872	131,191	6,651	133,493	1,049,394	10,468
1873	163,661	12,894	196,578	1,531,950	14,044
1874	192,457	16,641	228,817	1,925,548	19,963
1875	241,829	21,473	360,527	2,103,226	23,816
1876	274,874	24,658	399,255	2,644,322	34,808
1877	273,351	24,850	414,462	2,791,477	33,274

In 1877 there were 588 societies buying from the Wholesale. In the table above the reader will see the number of members in these Societies that exceeded 273,000. The Reserved Capital of the Wholesale is £27,898. This Society had (1878) 32 buyers and salesmen, including those stationed at Cork, Limerick, Kilmarnock, Tipperary, Waterford, Tralee, Armagh, and New York. The large Reserve Fund is yearly increased so as to render every department of the Society secure. One department, that of banking, has grown to such dimensions that its separation from the Wholesale is advised by the most prudent friends of the Society, and that it be conducted on recognised banking principles.

The fifty-first quarterly balance-sheet of this society was described by a writer in the *Newcastle Chronicle* (1877) as a huge folio pamphlet of twenty-four pages, filled with all sorts of accounts and statistics rendered with painstaking minuteness. The Wholesale serves 22 counties, besides parts of Scotland, Ireland, and the Isle of Man.

The total cash received from the whole area during one quarter was £815,411, yielding a dividend to the customer-societies of £6,211. The expense of management for the quarter was £6,223. The smallest return is from Cornwall, amounting to £3 10s. 4d. The Wholesale holds land and

buildings and the ship *Plover* of the estimated value of £72,130.[1] Its productive establishments were then a boot factory at Leicester, a biscuit factory at Crumpsall, and a soap factory at Durham. Besides these direct and exclusive investments the Wholesale held shares in seventeen manufacturing, printing, coal, and insurance companies.[2]

Members of this society, being stores, the division of profits is made after the manner of stores. In the productive workshops owned by the Wholesale there is no division of profits with labour. In some businesses custom is great and labour small, and in others labour is large; but labour in every productive society should have representation on the directorate. It is not possible to prescribe an inflexible law of division; but what should be inflexible is the partnership of labour. There should be set apart in workshops, as in stores, funds for educational purposes. It does not pay to have fools for members, and it is shabby to depend for information upon papers written and speeches given by charity.

Every producing society should be co-operative, self-acting, and self-sustaining. Like the products of Nature, every seed of organised industry, wherever it took root, would yield perfect fruit in every place; then federation will be the federation of equals gaining like an army by combination, perfect in individual discipline, and able, each like the English at Inkermann, to make a stand on its own account. Under a true co-operative system factories and industrial works will rear workmen who will have the old ambition of skilled craftsmen. The means of social education should be available in every mill and mine, factory and farm.

If the directors of the Wholesale add to their other great achievements the revival of participation in the profits of labour in their productive works, they may increase their profits, command the goodwill of the whole labouring community, and win a more splendid repute than was accomplished by Robert Owen at New Lanark, which subsisted for three years.

How difficult it was in the early days of Co-operation to get persons qualified to buy! Buyers, like poets, seem to be born,

[1] They now own eight steamships.

[2] *Newcastle Daily Chronicle*, 1876.

not made. They must possess the tact of the market. It is of small use that a man has money to buy with, unless he knows where to find the right dealers in the right thing. A mechanic, while confined to workshops, does not often know where to go to buy. There are certain tea fields in the world known to produce certain qualities of tea, and certain houses get possession of them. Some men who do know where to look for the article they want, probably do not know it when they see it. A man who is a great tea buyer has tea in his blood: just as famous mechanics who have steel in their blood, know metals by instinct, as some men do colours or textures, or as artists do forms and tints. I know one coffee roaster in Manchester who has coffee in his blood, and I never knew but one man in London who had. Sugars are also a special field for the exercise of natural taste. The Wholesale Society engage, or create, or nurture a class of great buyers, to ensure to the humblest store advantages they could not command for themselves. The officers of the Wholesale submit any doubtful food to the operation of the public analyst. Sometimes a store will report through its local buyer that it can purchase much cheaper than the society can buy through the Wholesale. Specimens of what has been so bought are asked for, when, on sending it to the analyst, it has transpired that the cheapness was owing to the commodity being fraudulently adulterated. Local buyers are subjected to so many temptations, by commissions clandestinely or openly offered by agents seeking orders, that many who are men of honesty when they take office cease to be so in a short time. Unless the store finds a buyer of unusual integrity who resists doing what he sees others do,[1] a store must pay a higher salary to place him above temptation. The Wholesale Society has been a great source of fiduciary morality and economy by affording the stores a buying agency.

A considerable sum of money has been spent with a view of instituting a Mississippi Valley Trading Company. A deputation was sent to New Orleans to promote that object, and a scheme promoted of International Co-operation between England and America, officially brought under the notice of the Grangers of the United States at their Annual Conferences.

[1] See "On Commissions," by John S. Storr, Trübner & Co., London.

At a quarterly meeting of the Wholesale several hundred delegates assemble, and a more striking spectacle of the capacity of the working class for business, when their minds are set upon it by self-training and intelligent interest, is not to be witnessed in England or elsewhere. Between the House of Commons of to-day and the Wholesale Conference there is an instructive comparison. The delegates of the Wholesale present an appearance of more alertness, brightness, and resolute attention to business than is to be seen in the House of Commons. In that House of 670 members there are not more than 70 who attend earnestly to business. There are about 100 who attend pretty well to their own business, and the remainder attend to anything else when it occurs to them. At the Wholesale Conference all the members attend to the business. The Chairman knows what the business is and accelerates it if it loiters on the way. Each delegate has in his hands a huge-sized folio covered with a wilderness of figures; and when one page is exhausted the rustle of leaves turning over simultaneously in every part of the hall is not unlike the rising of a storm at sea, or a descent of asteroids in November, or the vibration of silk when the rush of ladies takes place at her Majesty's Drawing-Room. The directors of the Wholesale, like Ministers in Parliament, are all on the platform, ready to answer questions put, and sometimes have replies on hand to questions which are not put. In every part of the large hall in Balloon Street, or Leman Street, the voices of questioners and critics break out in quick succession. No body of the industrious classes in England excel a Conference of the Wholesale; nowhere else are the delegates more numerous; nowhere else is every one better able to make a speech; every one having some business knowledge and experience of the branch he represents.

CHAPTER XXIV

LONDON CO-OPERATION—THE REVOLT OF THE GROCERS

"Folly is a contagious disease, but there is difficulty in catching wisdom."—G. J. H.

Co-operation has produced two distinct and protracted revolts —one of the grocers, another of their customers. The first revolt is very little known, and none are now alive who were observant of it, or actors in it. Co-operation cannot be said to be a disturbing influence since it seeks amity, and has always been pacific ; but private traders have been perturbed concerning it for a century. The first revolt of the grocers against it took place before the days of the first Reform Bill. We know tradesmen conspire against it ; when Mr. Baliol Brett (since Mr. Justice Brett) went down to oppose Mr. Cobden at Rochdale, his chief charge against the great free trader was that he was friendly to Co-operation. At the general election of 1872 candidates well disposed towards it were reticent concerning it, and others not reticent, who had held seats in the previous Parliament, lost them. The knowledge that they had stood up for fair play for co-operators proved fatal to them. Co-operation we know has been the perplexity of two Governments. Chancellors of the Exchequer have a terror of deputations praying to have Co-operation put down. The Government of Mr. Gladstone carefully abstained from saying anything in its favour, and that of Lord Beaconsfield abstained from doing anything against it. Co-operation was said to be impossible ; and if not impossible impractical ; nevertheless efforts are constantly made to prevent the impracticable from being put into practice.

Adversaries among shopkeepers have shown skill in pre-

serving themselves from the infection of wisdom. Though confident in their superiority as trained competitors, they show distress at the appearance of amateurs in the field, as the Church clergy did, when the untutored Wesleyans took to preaching on the village green. It was beneath the clerical dignity to fear competition. They strengthened it by showing terror at it, as tradesmen do at Co-operation.

The Co-operation of our time, imagined to be a recent invention, is built upon the ruins of extinct movements buried out of sight and knowledge of the commercial classes of to-day, under forests of forgotten publications as completely as Pompeii under the ashes of Vesuvius. Strange is it to see grocers and tradesmen descending into the streets, to arrest the progress of Co-operation, holding indignation meetings in the anterooms of the Government in Downing Street, and to read that their forefathers in business were equally excited a century ago.

When the Union Mill was first commenced in Devonport, adjoining Plymouth, in 1815, the members had no mill, bakehouse, or shop of their own, in which to make up or sell their flour. They rented a small store, in which to sell their bread, and were dependent on a baker for making it. The bakers soon combined against them, and wrote to the Admiralty to put them down. The Government never appear to have been very anxious to take the part of one set of tradesmen against another. A venerable survivor, who was 84 years old in 1863, mortgaged a house as he had to raise £600 to enable a new society to be established in the town.[1]

The British Association (for the Promotion of Co-operation) of 1830 brought under the notice of its members "with extreme regret that an ignorant yet powerful band of petty shopkeepers at Hampstead, has been successful by bribes and cunning in frustrating the attempt of some co-operators in that place to hold a public meeting, and that the parochial authorities of Tunbridge Wells and of Thurmaston, in Leicestershire, have withdrawn the trifling pittance given by the parish to some poor people who were making attempts to relieve themselves from so degrading a dependence for bread. Others threatened with like privations have been obliged to

[1] Letter of James Pound, *Co-operator*, vol. iv., p. 87.

withdraw from membership of the co-operative societies, and remain a burden to their parishes."[1] The probability is that the shopkeepers who happened to be guardians were willing to throw upon their neighbours this liability in order to protect their own interests at the counter. In other places local influence was brought to bear upon officers of the Government, and representations were made to them on behalf of grocers. At Godalming, in Surrey, the trustees of a Co-operative Association in 1830 were refused a licence for the sale of tea by the Excise officers, to prevent them beginning the grocery trade, which would interfere with that of retail dealers close by. Whereupon Mr. G. R. Skene wrote to the Board of Excise, who behaved very well in the matter. The persons refusing the licence received a severe reprimand, and a licence was instantly granted with apologies, and an illegal fee returned. At Poole a threatened extortion of the parish rates was made upon the co-operators with a view to deter them, but it was successfully resisted. Mr. Skene was the Secretary of the British Association for Promoting Co-operative Knowledge, which met in London.

The grocers being personally affected by co-operative shopkeeping have been oftener before the public in opposition to it, but they have not been more unpleasant in their action than manufacturers, or farmers, or other classes, whose trade interests have been affected by any rival movement. The clergy have been quite as disagreeable to Dissenting ministers, and have appealed to Parliament to suppress them oftener than shopkeepers have appealed for public aid. There seems to be no difference in the practices of gentlemen and poor men where trade interests are threatened. Employers, capitalists, and even bishops and noblemen, were all as spiteful and as offensive as workmen, to whom lower wages meant disease and home misery. From 1826 to 1836 numerous instances occur of the "superior" classes being engaged in strikes and rattening and picketing as against the lower classes. The discreditable practices are solely imputed to working men and trade unionists. Grocers have been the most noisy, but co-operators have been attacked by more dangerous adversaries.

[1] Third Quarterly report of the "Proceedings of the British Association for Promoting Co-operative Knowledge."

Mr. William Carson, a delegate to the Third Co-operative Congress, held in London in April, 1832, related that "he held a situation with a highly respectable architect employed by the Commissioners for building churches, amongst whom were several bishops and others of the aristocracy. His discharge was sent him although he had a wife and large family to maintain, because he had rendered himself obnoxious to the Commissioners by the active exertions he had made in aid of Co-operation." Upon the architect appealing to the Commissioners on Mr. Carson's behalf, telling them of the situation in which he would be placed if they were determined upon his discharge, the reply was "he must be discharged and they would bear the responsibility." Whatever injustice these inspired gentlemen practised, they were pretty safe, and they knew it.

Mr. E Taylor, delegate from Birkacre, Lancashire, who represented a society of more than three hundred persons, whose premises for printing silks and cottons stood at a rental of £600, stated that they suffered greatly from the jealousies of capitalists and masters who had tampered with their landlord to get them turned out of their premises.[1] These cases were oft reported. The jealous adversary generally succeeded.

In the days of the Cotton Famine in Lancashire and Yorkshire the shopkeepers on relief committees oft behaved with incredible shabbiness to the co-operators. In many towns they caused the co-operators to be refused any participation in the funds publicly subscribed for the relief of the distressed.

Liberals have always been more or less prompt in befriending Co-operation; but tradesmen, in their hostility to it, have always assumed that the Conservatives could be depended upon to put it down. It is therefore justice to record the honourable letter which the late Earl Derby wrote at the opening of the new store at Prestwich, dated Knowsley, January 6, 1864. His Lordship said to Mr. Pitman, "If any persons have been led to believe that I look coldly on the co-operative movement, they are greatly mistaken. It has always appeared to me to be well calculated to encourage in the operative classes habits of frugality, temperance, and self-dependence; and if the

[1] Report of Third Congress, 1832.

managers of these societies conduct them prudently, not entering into wild speculations, and retaining in hand a sufficient amount of reserved capital to meet casual emergencies, they cannot fail to exercise a beneficial influence upon the habits of the population, both morally and physically." Lord Derby was a man of honour, he might sincerely sacrifice his country to his principles, but he never sacrificed his convictions to his party.

Passages have been published from time to time by men of eminence or influence, favourable to Co-operation. Among these were John Stuart Mill, the present Lord Derby (1877), Mr. Gladstone, Professor Francis William Newman, Professor Frederick Denison Maurice, Canon Kingsley, the Rev. William Nassau Molesworth, Lord Brougham, Mr. Bright, Mr. Cobden, and William Chambers. Mr. Mill's opinion, written at the opening of the Liverpool Provident Association, is remarkable, like most statements of his, for its completeness and comprehensiveness. He said, "Of all the agencies which are at work to elevate those who labour with their hands, in physical condition, in social dignity, and in those moral and intellectual qualities on which both the others are ultimately dependent, there is none so promising as the present co-operative movement. Though I foresaw, when it was only a project, its great advantages, its success has thus far exceeded my most sanguine expectations, and every year adds strength to my conviction of the salutary influence it is likely to exercise over the destinies of this and other countries."

It was the perilous but honourable practice of Mr. Robert Lowe when he was Chancellor of the Exchequer, to give what information he could which might serve a deputation waiting upon him. Had he talked a few platitudes to them and left them to believe he would do what he could when he knew he could do nothing, he had been more popular but less deserving of honour. He told the deputation from the National Chamber of Trade, introduced by Mr. W. H. Smith, M.P., later, Lord of the Admiralty, that "The only way to defeat these societies was by competing with them in the market, and if they were in a condition to do that, let them do so, and combine together, and offer to the public as good terms as these societies did."

Mr. Gladstone, in his correspondence with Messrs. Evison and Barter in 1868, told them with like wisdom and honesty, "Long credits mean large loans by men in business out of their trading capital. This system aggravates the risk of bad debts, which form an additional charge to a good debtor: and it is connected with a general irregularity and uncertainty which must also be paid for. I cannot help thinking that traders are in fault also, and that much might be done by a vigorous effort, and by combination among traders in favour of ready-money dealings."

Some of the deputation to the Liberal ministry were incited, for political reasons, to elicit expressions of opinion that might be used to influence shopkeepers' votes at the election. For tradesmen to ask the Government for aid against competitors was to confess their incompetence to conduct their own business on trade principles. Most of them knew that the Tories could no more interfere on their behalf than the Liberals, and Mr. Gladstone was more their friend than they deserved to find him in the advice he gave them. He saw that if the chief grocers would combine together and open a large ready-money store, guaranteeing the best provisions, they might rival the stores, and in some cases supersede them; making sufficient profit to share it with purchasers.

Professor Thorold Rogers states—in the address delivered by him at the London Congress in 1875—that, "from careful inquiries made by him of large manufacturers in many branches of productive industry, as to the cost at which these articles were charged in their books when they left the workshop, compared with the prices charged to the purchaser by the retail trader, he found that the additions made, as the charge of distribution, very commonly doubled the price of the article." Not that the retail trade gained the enormous addition, but that the cost of distribution is increased from excess of middlemen. Co-operators are often under the illusion that their savings represent the profit of the shopkeeper, whereas they also represent the cost which the shopkeeper incurs. The co-operator gains what the shopkeeper loses, and they do not. Herein the shopkeepers by combination can gain equally.

The Civil Service Co-operative Society have a place of business in the Haymarket, yet every day, nearly from top

to the bottom of the street, as great a crowd of carriages of the nobility are to be seen as are to be found in Piccadilly, at Fortnum and Mason's the day before the Derby day. As many footmen surround the doors of this Civil Service Store as are to be found round Swan and Edgar's, or Waterloo House, in Cockspur Street. Yet at this Haymarket store there are more forms to be gone through, and more trouble to be encountered in buying a pound of butter than in obtaining a dividend from the Bank of England. This is not all the wonder. The Haymarket is not a place of sweetest repute. True, there are honest houses and residents of good fame in it; yet it remains suspicious to hear a young marchioness accosted in Rotten Row by a young nobleman, who assures her he has not had the pleasure to see her since he met her in the Haymarket. It could hardly be any light or unimportant thing which induces ladies of "high degree" to subject themselves to be addressed in terms which are considered to require explanation. What is it that attracts these illustrious customers; and induces them to incur all this conspicuousness, suspicion, discomfort, and fatigue, but the satisfaction of providing their houses with articles of consumption which they think they can depend upon for purity, and obtain at moderate charges? There is no instance in the whole of London of any shop so unattractively situated commanding customers so numerous and so distinguished. This shows the grocers what they have to do.

Advantage comes to a great store saving the rents of a hundred shops, a hundred servants, the support of a hundred proprietors, in addition to saving the taxes and advertisements of as many places. The cost of small shops is very great to the public, but the gain to the shopkeeper is little. The greater part of what he receives in price is lost on the way by his many expenses in making his little sales, that there scarcely remains in his hands enough to keep him in his useful but often needless calling. It is only this little profit of the shopkeeper that the co-operator intercepts. He gathers up what never comes into the shopkeeper's hands. The unseeing saying that "what the co-operator gains comes out of the shopkeeper's pocket" causes the shopkeeper to think himself five times more harmed than is true, and it conceals from the

co-operator that four out of five portions of his gain are not won in a victory over the tradesmen, but by his joining in business with his fellows, by faithfulness to his own store, and by equity in trade. If every shopkeeper was abolished to-morrow by Act of Parliament, co-operators would gain little. Co-operative prosperity does not come by prayer, but by prudence; not by caprice, but by concert. It is seeing this clearly, seeing it constantly, seeing it always, which constitutes the education of the co-operator.

Pictures have been drawn by shopkeepers of every tradesman being bankrupt and the town in the hands of the co-operators. Of course this never happened, but it was thought all the more likely by the excited, because it never could happen. An enterprising friend of mine,[1] wishing me to name some town where he might open a new shop, I at once said, "Rochdale, and nestle near the store, that is the best place for a new shopkeeper." "Well," he answered, "any one who looks about towns to see what is the matter with them, and what openings they offer, sees what people living in them do not see, because they are so obvious, and the obvious is the last thing people do see—but you must be wrong about Rochdale." My answer was, "Near a store is the place for a new shop to pay. First, a number of outsiders will buy off you, to spite the store. Next, half the co-operators will buy off you themselves, for half the co-operators always think the goods in the shops are cheaper and better than those in their own stores." Every director of a store knows this. He has heard it at quarterly meetings a hundred times. Half the stores do not buy themselves off their own Wholesale Society, because they believe they "can do better elsewhere." Half the members of any store are dividend hunters—not a bad sort of hunting in its way—and I am glad that co-operative stores are good hunting-grounds for the working classes; but an ignorant hunter is like an untrained setter, he has not an educated nose. He does not know where to find the bird; or he starts it foolishly, whereby it gets away. I went the other day into one of the three greatest stores in the country. My first question, after a long absence, was, as is my wont, "Have

[1] Mr. Henry Holland, boot and shoe manufacturer, of Buckingham, and the frequent host of John Cassell.

you the *Co-operativeNews* about (the Journal of the societies)? How many purchasers enter this shop in a week?" "Four thousand," was the reply. "How many *Co-operative News* do you sell?" "Oh, FOUR DOZEN!" "Yes," I answered, "that statement wants a great big 'O' to preface it. That means that out of every 4,000 members of the store 3,952 believe they can be co-operators and hunt dividends better without co-operative knowledge than with it." In the pork and butter shop, where they had 1,000 customers a week, they sold one dozen *Co-operative News* only. There was the same discreditable proportion of non-intelligent members found all over the store. The dividend hunters, their name is legion, the intelligence hunters—are twelve in the thousand. Since that time that cultivated store has lost a great pot of gold at one swoop—enough to have bought a copy of the *Co-operative News* every week for every member for the last ten years, and given each a penny with it to read it. Had they done this they would have now £30,000 in hand out of vanished funds. "Therefore, my teetotal, energetic manufacturing friend, if thou wantest to make money, open thy shop under the shadow of a great store, and if only half the unreading members buy of thee, thou wilt make a fortune long before they take in their own paper. Besides, put into thy account the mass of people who do not understand co-operation. In towns like Liverpool and Birmingham the memory of it has almost died out. A mighty and historic store may have 10,000 members in a population of 100,000 inhabitants. That leaves nine-tenths of all purchasing people to the tradesmen. Does not that give you an abounding chance? Then remember that the majority of persons use their brains so little, that the avenues of their minds are blocked up. When they were born there was no School Board to keep the entrance of their intelligence clear, and put something through it. Never fear, shopkeeping will last your time." My friend followed my advice, and prospered exceedingly. A shopkeeper who knows his business can hold his business. It is the other sort who turn into querulous complainants.

There is a saying, "Mad as a hatter." There is nobody so mad as a grocer, when he imagines a co-operator is after him. Yet the better sort of shopkeepers are among the best

friends co-operators have found. They have generously taught workmen the art of keeping shops. In many an emergency they have given counsel and aid. I know it, because I have asked it for the aid of young stores. In Scotland and England I know many shopkeepers—men of genius in their way, masters of their business. Their service of the public is a fine art, and buyers of taste will always go to them. The co-operators are not born who will harm them. Shopkeepers have no more reason to be afraid of Co-operation, than inn-keepers have to be afraid of the Permissive Bill. Of course there will be mad publicans as well as demented grocers.

The grocers set Sir Thomas Chambers to make an inquiry in Parliament whether the Government could not put down Civil Service Co-operative Supply Associations. Any clear-headed co-operator, for a moderate fee, would put them up to a thing or two which would endanger the best Civil Service Co-operative Society in the metropolis. All Sir Thomas Chambers could do, if he got his way, would be to spite the Civil Service gentlemen. Once they were removed other men of business would be put in their places.

The Right Hon. C. B. Adderley, M.P. (Conservative), attended a meeting of the Ladywood Co-operative Society in Birmingham, 1869, and made a speech strongly in its favour, and said that "God intended the whole world to be one great association of co-operation." Mr. Sampson Lloyd, M.P. for Plymouth (also a Conservative, elected in lieu of Mr. Morrison, the former Liberal member, who was charged with sympathy with Co-operation), also sent a letter to the Ladywood meeting in approval of its object. Mr. William Howitt afterwards made it an occasion to thank God that Mr. Adderley had discovered, like many other statesmen and landholders, that Co-operation is a great "school of natural instruction."[1] The Liberals, being more in favour of self-action and self-help among the people, have been more friendly to co-operators. Certainly the only members of Parliament who have been active on their behalf, and who have made sacrifices for their success, have been Liberals.

Civil Service Stores, Army and Navy Supply Associations, have done grocers harm in London, and not the Working

[1] *Co-operator*, January, 1869.

Class Stores which Mr. Morrison and Mr. Hughes supported. Yet they were sacrificed by the undiscerning shopkeeping elector who gave his vote to the real enemy. Mr. Hughes was certainly kept out of Parliament at Marylebone through the reputed resentment of the shopkeepers.

Mr. Walter Morrison, M.P., wrote a remarkable letter to the *Daily News* in 1873, in reply to some editorial comments, critical but not unfriendly. Mr. Morrison said : "You seem to think that the societies there represented conduct their trade after the fashion of the Civil Service societies in London. I venture to assert that the very large majority of those who have at heart the continued prosperity of co-operative societies deprecate that manner of doing their trade as earnestly as any retail shopkeeper. We hold that it is unfair to the honest tradesman, who sells genuine and unadulterated goods at a fair living profit, that it degrades Co-operation into a mere mercantile machine for cheapening the price of goods. From the Land's End to John o' Groat's there is not a workman's retail co-operative store which attempts to undersell the tradesmen of the locality ; when tradesmen have combined to ratten the store out of the district by underselling it, the stores have not retaliated in kind."

Though Conservative candidates have profited by opposing, or conniving at opposition to co-operators, it ought to be said to the honour of the Conservative press that it has never concealed its approval of the principle, even as respects Productive Co-operation as applied to manufactures, which fewer persons can be found to speak approvingly of. The *Standard* said, before a general election :—

"Co-operation, on the other hand, though possibly too weak a remedy to be relied upon altogether, is the best device for putting labour, more or less, on a level with capital, which has ever been attempted. As far as it goes it is thoroughly healthy in its action. The co-operative factory . . . competes with the private capitalist, and tends to keep up, at their highest possible level, the terms offered to the workmen in return for his labour."[1]

This was plainly said, the reader can see. The tradesman, therefore, has no ground for treating Co-operation as a political question.

[1] *Standard*, June 4, 1869.

CHAPTER XXV

LONDON CO-OPERATION.—THE REVOLT OF THE CUSTOMERS.

"The friends of order became insurgents when a real grievance came home to them. Partizans and apologists of trading confiscation, who regarded it as the reward assigned by Nature to successful competition, so long as they shared the spoil, discovered it to be a shameful exaction when they were subjects of it."—*Eccentricities of Opinion* (unpublished). G. J. H.

THE second revolt produced by Co-operation proved to be a revolt of customers. This long-foreseen but late-arriving insurgency, led to what, for convenience of description, may be designated "London Co-operation." This Metropolitan invention sprang up, extended, and attracted a pretty good share of attention. Early, original co-operation, as it is now regarded, is that which was organised and pursued in Rochdale. This model on which the great stores of the provinces have been founded has become known as "Rochdale Co-operation." It may be taken that there are two kinds of Co-operation—Rochdale Co-operation and London Co-operation. The public generally are not familiar with the distinction, but it contributes to clearness of view to apprehend the nature of the two forms and not mistake one for the other.

The Civil Service Supply Association began, the *Saturday Review* said, with some members of the Civil Service "who were pinched by low salaries and high prices"; they combined together for the purpose of obtaining articles of common domestic use at wholesale prices. They were soon encouraged by finding that they not only saved a good deal of money, but stood a better chance of obtaining goods of high quality than when they bought at retail shops; but also by learning what great profits the Rochdale, Halifax, and Leeds Stores had made

in the same way. Thus gentlemen of London were inspired by the artisans and weavers of Lancashire to establish themselves as shopkeepers. Their humble predecessors had proved the advantages of trading by concert. Thus it dawned upon the Metropolitan understanding that competition, held up as the nursing mother of all social blessings, had not proved itself to be that self-regulating and provident agency it was supposed to be. Certain members of the Civil Service therefore proposed a general revolt of customers in their body, against London shopkeepers, and devised an association consisting of two classes of members—members who were shareholders, and members who merely held tickets entitling them to make purchases at the stores. Some of the promoters of one association were considered to have acted with regard to their personal interest, in certain private contracts, concerning which the members were not consulted.[1] The general principle professed by all was co-operative, as far as it went, which was to supply the members with goods, at wholesale prices, with such addition as left a sufficient margin for managing expenses. The value of a share at death or withdrawal was fixed at 10s.

Shareholders of the C.S.S.A.[2] had prescribed to them the same advantage as members—namely, that of obtaining good articles at moderate prices without deriving profit from the transactions carried on in their name. This association soon came to have two places of business, one in the City, the

[1] At a public meeting in 1875, at which Sir Cecil Beardon presided, he said he had read the articles of the association and also the contracts, and was now ready to admit that there was a great deal to condemn in the articles. The contracts were not such as he should have agreed to if he had been on the board. When he looked at them he found that the contracts with the promoters had been cleverly drawn, and it was impossible to set them aside. Therefore, instead of going into legal proceedings, the issue of which could hardly be doubtful, he set himself to work, with assistance, to endeavour to abate the terms which had been agreed upon with Messrs. John Chisholme & Co., and the endeavour was not altogether unsuccessful. He had also used his influence with Mr. Bentley and Mr. Evans. Mr. Bentley had agreed to submit to any reduction of his commission which the board thought reasonable, and Mr. Evans had done the same. This related to the New Civil Service Store. At none of these London Stores is there openness and publicity of financial facts as there is in real co-operative societies.

[2] C.S.S.A. (Civil Service Supply Association) are the initials on the windows of the large building erected in Bedford Street, Covent Garden, by this Association, a vast well-built store of great completeness and convenience.

other in Long Acre ; each being a vast warehouse embracing almost every description of retail trade. During several years the association intercepted half a million of money on its way to the ordinary shopkeepers' tills. Of course care was taken that the addition made to the wholesale prices was prudently arranged to leave sufficient to prevent risk of loss. An excess of profit over working expenses thus accrued, which left every year an accumulating sum in the hands of the association. In a few years this amounted to more than £80,000, when stormy meetings were held to determine who should have this money. On the whole this association seems to have been governed by a committee of very honourable gentlemen, desirous of preventing it descending into a mere trading company, in which the shareholders make special profits at the expense of others. The committee were honourably in favour of applying the great balance in their hands to the reduction in the prices of the articles, by which every member would obtain advantages in proportion to his purchases. It was ultimately decided to distribute it among the shareholders, as was done among the same class in the old co-operative societies of the Pre-Constructive period.

The Haymarket store was a modest business-looking shop, tame in appearance, with the Royal Arms over the door, and a small brass plate on the entrance, bearing the words "Civil Service Co-operative Society." This is the principal provision store belonging to an association of gentlemen from every branch of the British Civil Service.

This Haymarket store is recorded [1] to have grown out of one commenced by certain clerks at the General Post Office in 1864. Lowness of salary, and serious charges on the part of grocers, were alleged as reasons for forming a combination against them. A strange circular was issued, calling upon members of the Civil Service generally to form a Co-operative Society. At the Post Office there were high officials—Sir Rowland Hill and Mr. W. H. Ashurst, the solicitor, who were both acquainted with the history of Co-operation. They were probably not consulted when it was first thought of, as the project was carried out in a far less complete way than persons so well informed might have advised. Members of the Civil

[1] *Saturday Review.*

Service generally did not then know Co-operation from Communism, nor were quite sure which was which, and the proposal was viewed with considerable disfavour by the majority of them. Periodicals and pamphlets, published in London, had oft told the marvellous story of co-operative profits in the North of England. Mr. Mill, in his "People's Edition of Political Economy," had borne powerful testimony to its significance. Competition was held to be the parent of all the advantages of the market, but the excesses of tradesmen's bills were felt to be a great price to pay for them, and eminent members of the Civil Service at length agreed to join in the revolt against them. Ultimately a board of directors was formed from each of the principal departments of the Crown. It was agreed to commence with a capital of £5,000 in £5 shares, bearing 5 per cent. interest, and no more. This was the Rochdale amount of shares and limit of interest; a good rule, though adopted originally from distrust of capitalists. The first store was opened near the General Post Office, and limited to members and their families. Purchasing members were required to pay a fee of 5s. annually for tickets not transferable, giving the power of buying at the store. The success of the Post Office Store extended the spirit of insurgency all over the Service, and a new society was opened in the Haymarket, by officials of the higher State Departments, who were joined in their rebellion by members in every branch of the Service—Home, Colonial, and Foreign; by peers, members of Parliament, bishops, judges, colonial governors, foreign consuls, and other high Government officials, who had never before regarded Co-operation otherwise than as the ignorant dream of dangerous visionaries.

The store tea was imported direct from tea-lands. With the purchasing ticket of the member was handed to the subscriber a book giving a detailed list of everything sold at the store itself, with price of each article annexed, a list of every merchant or tradesman with whom the association had dealings, and a catalogue of special articles sold by special tradesmen, advertisements of merchants on the society's list, and other information of considerable importance to members of the Civil Service abroad. The society had physicians, surgeons, accoucheurs, apothecaries, consulting counsel, solicitors, stock-

brokers—all of whom are well known in London as men of good standing in their several professions—who engaged to supply the wants of members of the society at a considerable reduction of their usual charges. The Provident Clerks' Life Insurance Association had an understanding also with the society by which members were insured at lower than ordinary rates. These operations arose in another London invention, to which, in courtesy, we may give the name of Floating Co-operation, which consists in inducing tradesmen to advertise in some store list of prices, or store journal, and in return customers at the store are invited to give their orders to him. The tradesman further undertakes to make a reduction in his prices to these customers. In some cases he also gives a commission to the store upon the orders he thus receives. If a tradesman gets a great accession of orders by this means, he can afford to sell as he would to a wholesale purchaser. The customer, in this case, has no security as to the quality or fairness of his bargain, which a co-operative store affords him. It is an unpleasant device at the best. If the customers are few, the tradesman gives them a poor welcome ; and if he has two prices for his goods, he sometimes tries to discover if the customer has a co-operative ticket upon him before he names the lower price. The customer has probably heard that the reduction is often put on before it is taken off, and sometimes conceals what sort of purchaser he is until he has made his bargain. It seems a prostitution of the honest name of Co-operation to apply it to these furtive Pauline contrivances for economising expenditure by overcoming the tradesman "with guile." The attributes of Co-operation are equity, openness, and frank consent! None of these qualities are much present in this system of cheapening by connivance. Imitative Co-operation is hardly worth more notice than any other expedient by which trade is diversified without increasing public morality or amity among purchasers.

These details will give the reader a practical idea of the many sides on which shopkeepers and professional men were attacked at once. Carriers by land and sea, insurance companies, and all orders of men, were made to "stand and deliver" up some portion of the profits, which, from time immemorial, had been theirs. The English excel in insur-

rection when they once give their minds to it. Peers, bishops, members of Parliament, and gentlemen, when they commence it, put the poor and limited insurgency of working men to shame. Neither Communism nor Co-operation, in the hands of the people, has ever displayed this comprehensive rapacity. No working people ever broke so many ties with their neighbours. No friend of Co-operation wishes to see it advanced in this hasty and embittering way.

The poor are driven by necessity, and oft display an ignorant impatience of wrong which cannot be rectified at once. They precipitate themselves into change, and hope to find it improvement. But from the classes better off, who have larger means of deliberate action and more intelligence, there is to be expected some taste in advancement and that considerateness in progress which shall make it alluring—raising it from a brutal impetuosity to the level of high commerce.

Many a gentleman forsook the shopkeeper between whose family and his own friendly offices had been interchanged for generations. Peradventure father and grandfather before him had been honoured customers at the shop which he now clandestinely deserted. Had these gentlemen offered cash payments and given their orders themselves, or sent their wives in their carriages to do it, as they do at the Haymarket shop, they would have been served in many cases quite as cheaply, and with more courtesy than at the store of Imitative Co-operation. Co-operation is the necessity of the poor, it is not the necessity of gentlemen. When a shopkeeper cannot supply good articles, or will not make reasonable charges, or has no special knowledge of commodities, and pursues shop-keeping as a mere business and not as an art, customers of taste have no choice but to make a change. Some gentlemen, who have taken the part of leaders in this revolt of customers, have been actuated by the conviction that the middleman as an agent of distribution is mostly a costly instrument of obsolete commerce. They admit that where the retail dealer is also the manufacturer of his commodities, as in the case of many trades where the shopkeeper sells the productions of his own handicraft, he will always hold his place. He can guarantee the goodness of his materials, and his skill and ingenuity ought to speak for themselves. Where this is the

case, he will attract and keep customers despite all the Co-operation in the world. He needs no costly shop, customers will go in search of him anywhere. Work or product of any kind, which has the character of the artificer in it, will always be sought after so long as taste exists or honesty is valued. The mere middleman who has special knowledge of the nature of the articles or commodities in which he deals, and who has a character for honestly describing them, and of charging reasonably for goods to which his discernment and attestation add value, will always hold his place and command respect. But the class of mere mechanical middlemen and shopkeepers who do not know, and do not care, what they offer you, provided they can induce you to buy it, or who conspire to keep up prices by preventing the customer from finding any better article in the market, are mere parasites of trade, whom Co-operation serves society by sweeping away.

London Co-operation, as represented by Civil Service or Army and Navy Stores, has only the merit of saving somewhat the pockets of their customers, without affording them the facility and inducement to acquire the habit of saving, which is needed as much by the middle class as by the poor. These societies, organised chiefly to supply goods at a cheap rate, and make a large profit for the shareholders, are not co-operative in the complete sense of that term, since the managers have an interest distinct from the shareholders, and the shareholders an interest distinct from the purchasers. The managers are not known to care for Co-operation as a system of equity and honesty, and are not under the supervision of directors elected by the purchasers, and charged with the duty of carrying out the principle of Co-operation. Civil Service Stores, or Military Service Stores, and similar associations, are virtually private commercial societies bent upon realising the economy of combination without caring much about the morality of it. They do not intend to disregard morality any more than other commercial firms, but leave it to take care of itself and, peradventure, hope it will come all right. The managers generally have in view the highest remuneration they can obtain for themselves compatible with keeping the shareholders in a contented state of mind with regard to their dividend. The shareholders in their turn are chiefly solicitous

to see that purchasers have goods of such quality and at such prices as shall secure their custom. But whether the quality is as pure as it should be, or the prices as low as they might be, are not considerations which they have any interest in entertaining. These associations do not proceed so much upon the principle of equity as upon doing business. The common principle of managers, shareholders, and purchasers is that of all competitive commerce—each for himself and the devil take the hindmost; and such is the activity of the devil in business, that he commonly does it. Co-operation, on the other hand, is a concerted arrangement for keeping the devil out of the affair. A scheme of equity has no foremost and no hindmost for the devil to take. Everybody in the society stands in a circle, and the total profits made are distributed equitably all round the circumference.

"London Co-operation" begins in distrust of the shopkeeper, and ends with obtaining, at considerable personal trouble, a reduction of a shilling in the pound at the store counter; and if the purchaser can obtain the same reduction at the grocer's shop, and the goods are equally satisfactory, there is no reason why he should not return to the shop and abandon the store. "London Co-operation" which most stirs the terrors of shopkeepers has small hold upon the interest or respect of its customers, beyond that which accrues from saving them a shilling in the pound. Under this cold and covetous plan the mighty phalanx of great stores throughout the country would never have existed. All the public would ever have seen would be a solitary big grocer's shop here and there, mentioned, perhaps, by some commercial traveller in the commercial-room at night, but neither Parliament nor history would have heard of Co-operation. The great movement has grown in strength and in public interest by capitalising the savings of the customers. By Co-operation stores create a new system of distribution; by productive societies, where profit is shared with labour, it aims at changing the character of industry by substituting self-employment for hired labour.

Imitative Co-operation, so far as it may assist the incomes of some struggling middle-class persons, poorly-paid civil servants, law, and mercantile clerks, is an advantage. In so far as these shadowy stores call the attention of the more

influential classes to Co-operation, and interest them in it, and induce them to countenance the co-operative principle, they do good and are part of the general propagandism of the idea of economy by concert. Such praise as belongs to this order of service I ungrudgingly give, but there is no use in making more of anything than there is in it; and if a scheme is good as far as it goes but falls short of what it should be, and fails to do the good it ought, that should be made clear in the interest of progress.

Thus there are two kinds of stores, the market-price charging and saving stores, and the Civil Service under-selling and unsaving stores. The market-price and saving store belongs to real Co-operation, which is a device for the improvement of the condition of the poor. In the provinces the sort of supply association which the Civil Service stores have brought into imitative existence are often mere schemes of gentlemen at large, for intercepting the profits of tradesmen, for the benefit of shareholders and persons of position, who turn amateur huxters for a pecuniary consideration. Among the "patrons" or "directors" whose names are published there is scarcely one familiar to the co-operative ears. They know nothing of Co-operation—possibly care nothing for it. They cannot explain its principles nor advocate them, nor vindicate them. In its struggles they have taken no part, nor rendered any aid. In its difficulties they have given it no encouragement, nor made any sacrifices to support it. In the days when adversaries abounded, they stood aloof. When Co-operation has been regarded with odium they disowned it. In all its literature, their speeches or writings in its defence are nowhere to be found. When Acts of Parliament had to be obtained, at the infinite labour and cost of years of agitation, they took no part, and gave no thought, or time, or trouble to conquer the reluctance of the House of Commons for facilitating the formation of societies, or concede them legal protection.

There is no reason, of course, why those who did not do what they ought, or what they might, should not be applauded for doing what they did in the right direction. A co-operative society proper divides whatever savings it makes among all its customers who buy from it, and employés, who

can do so much for its interest; an Imitative Co-operation merely gives partial reduction in price to the purchaser, and awards the remainder as personal profit to managers or directors, to promoters or patrons.

An original co-operative store permanently increases the means of the poor, by saving their profits for them and teaching them the art of thrift. An imitative store does nothing more than cultivate the love of cheapness without providing security that the cheapness is real.

An original store, by augmenting the means of humble purchasers, prevents them becoming a burden upon the poor-rates and a tax upon shopkeepers. An imitative store renders little service to the indigent, and by abstracting the custom of the tradesman, reduces his means of paying the poor-rates which fall upon him.

At the same time since the better class of London stores have stopped credit purchases, and enabled the public to obtain articles at a lower rate than otherwise they could obtain them, they have raised the expectation that the articles they supply can be depended upon to be good of their kind, and to raise this expectation is useful, as it imposes a certain obligation of meeting it, and so far as the London stores accomplish these things, they may claim credit for usefulness, and are to be regarded for the merit they have. As copyists of Co-operation they are entitled to "honourable mention" according to their skill.

It would be no more fair in commerce than in literature to judge any one by some other standard than that which he has set before himself. A critic ofttimes condemns an author because his book does not come up to some ideal in the critic's mind of what such a book ought to be. This is not criticism, it is dogmatism. A writer, or a social contriver, is not to be condemned for falling below a model which he never proposed to imitate. If the model he has chosen is a poor one or an unworthy one, it is plainly useful to say so, that nobler attempts may be incited in him or others. A trader in ideas or commodities is to be estimated mainly by the good sense and good services to be found in the work he actually does. The leading aim of Co-operation is not merely to increase present comfort (albeit not a disagreeable thing to do),

it seeks also to ensure competence. Those who do not provide for the future of themselves and families, as far as they can—or far as they ought [1] are not merely dependent, they are mean, since they leave to chance, or the charity of others, to provide for them when the evil day comes. The middle and upper classes are not much better than the working classes in these respects. Noblemen quarter their families on the State, and a Conservative Government (unless it is much misjudged) is always ready to find them facilities to that end, in the ecclesiastical, military, and maritime departments, and by keeping in their hands the school endowments of the poor. Noblemen have no general reputation for paying their debts when due. Industry is considered a plebeian pursuit, and the middle class ape a gentility of indebtedness which their creditors are far from approving.

In a society on the Rochdale plan the profit due to the purchaser is, by arrangement, saved for him. The society becomes to him a Savings Bank. He finds himself surrounded by members and neighbours who have £20, £50, £100, and some £200 in the society, intending to invest it in buying a house, or investing it in some co-operative quarry, or mine, or manufactory.

In what is called "London Co-operation," as represented by Civil Service and similar societies, no facility of saving in the way we have described is afforded, though in thousands of families of the middle class, and indeed in many of those of the wealthier classes, the facility would be as valuable as in the households of working people. In co-operative families, when the father or mother begins to save in this way, the example spreads through the house. The young people learn to save. They see the advantage of possessing money of their own, at their own control, and acquire a spirit of wholesome independence because they owe everything to themselves. This saving costs them no privation ; they lose no comfort to effect their accumulations. They have simply to make all their small purchases at a store, and the small profits they would distribute among the shopkeepers about them come at the end of the quarter into their own pockets. Sometimes these young

[1] For instance, no one is bound to provide for his family so far as to relieve them of the duty of self-exertion.

co-operators persuade their friends, who do not belong themselves to any store, to let them make their purchases for them. These purchases, entrusted to these minor co-operators, cost nothing to those who give them, and the youthful commissioners learn thrift and gain by the opportunity, and become little millionaires in their own estimation.

In co-operative families the sons and daughters commonly become members on their own account. The young men learn other economies, avoiding needless and wasteful pleasures which they would never otherwise avoid, and are the better in their habits and health in consequence ; and when the time for setting up households of their own arrives, they often have a house of their own to go into. It is found that young women are often as clever as their brothers in saving, when their minds are well put in the way of it. Many a girl has found herself sought for in marriage by a better class of suitor than would ever have fallen in her way, had it not been discovered that she had a fund of her own in the co-operative store. The certainty that a prudent girl will make a prudent wife, and be the mistress of a prudent household, is a popular belief which acts as an unsolicited letter of recommendation to her. If it can be shown that persons can save without laying anything by, accumulate money without paying anything out of their pocket, and save without living any way poorer, or meaner than they did, this were surely to make saving easy, alluring, and inevitable. This is the moral, social, and salutary discovery which co-operative societies have made. Future advantage seems to most persons a poor thing compared with present satisfaction. Many only half believe in the need of a future day, which comes as surely as death ; and often they both come together. A co-operative store dispenses with this scant, difficult, and precarious heroism of daily life, without requiring the strength of mind which looks the future in the face, and provides for it. A co-operative store offers means of saving without effort. No homily, no precept, no wise saw, or modern instance, no exhortation, or prayer, or entreaty, inspire strength of will or wise and lasting purpose in the average mind of any class, like facility alone brought to their doors, put into their hands, saving made part of the very convenience of their daily life, which Co-operation furnishes,

effects the change from thoughtlessness to thrift, as no other human device has ever been found to do.[1]

The press is at times as confusing as the pulpit.[2] Surely it is idle to say (as other political economists as eminent as Professor Hodgson have said) that if a man saves 2s. in the pound in a purchase it makes no difference to him whether he receives the money weekly or at the end of the quarter; he has the money in his pocket, and if he wants to save it he can do so. This is a mad theory of human conduct, as it implies that all men are perfect, that all minds are prudent, and bent upon prudence always; that the advantages and fine spirit of self-providence is present to the mind of every one, and present unintermittingly. It implies that opportunity of some gratification, which betrays nine out of every ten, every wakeful hour of their lives, can be set aside and disregarded at will. It implies that omnipresent strength of purpose which the philosopher extols as the perfection of character, which he never expects to see prevalent; which no Utopian ever dreams will be universal—is to be found in every one, and found always. If men could be trusted to save because they have the means of doing so, insurance societies would be impertinencies, since every man could more or less provide for himself if he took care of his means when he has them. All the laws and all the devices of social life, to protect the thoughtless from themselves, and to prevent temptation from destroying the foolish or the weak, would be unnecessary. Thus the com-

[1] This was admitted lately at Oxford, where dogmatic theology has been much better cared for than social morality. At the opening of Keble College, the Marquis of Salisbury said, "There never was a time in which frugality required to be so much preached to the educated classes of this country"; and Lord Selborne praised the arrangements of the College as a means, much needed, of protecting young students from pernicious indifference to "debt."

[2] The *Standard*, when it did not understand Co-operation, confounded the London version of it with the Rochdale plan, thus wrote contemptuously of the many moralities of the genuine store:—"The worst mistake into which the 'Co-operative leaders' seem to have fallen, is, that of over-estimating the importance of their retail grocery business. Playing at shop is a favourite amusement with children, and the managers of co-operative stores have carried out that innocent pursuit on a colossal scale with this useful result—that a number of ladies who have plenty of time on their hands succeed in procuring marmalade and Worcester sauce at a visible saving in pence; but it is nonsense to imagine that the co-operative stores can do more towards the regeneration of the world than is involved in the partial cheapening of groceries and the wholesome lesson thereby imparted to ordinary tradesmen" (*Standard*, June 4, 1869).

pulsory thrift of Co-operation is one of the most necessary and beneficent features of that wise self-helping scheme.

Cobden held the theory that nothing would be so popular as a newspaper distinguished for furnishing facts. No paper ever lived long enough to succeed in this adventurous department. The cost of getting at facts is enormous. They are as scarce as gold. The most valuable facts commonly lie very low down, and are as uncertain to find, and costly to get at, as boring for coal in an unexplored field. So difficult are they to find that men are celebrated as discoverers who first produce facts in art, or politics; in science, or social life; and when found it requires a man of genius to identify them and interpret them. Ordinary people do not know what to do with them. In a West End district in London, where needy or thoughtless people are not expected to abound, there is a pawnbroker's shop where 2,000 pledges are redeemed every Saturday night and 400 new pledges are brought in. Pawnbrokers' shops are the humble banks of the poor, who, when sudden sickness or distress overtakes them, or a journey has to be made to a dying child or parent, indigent women can there obtain a little money when they have no friend to lend them any, and only possess some wearing apparel, or wedding ring, which they can give up in exchange for money. These cases, however, represent a very small portion of that great crowd whose folly, or vice, or improvidence make up the 2,400 applicants who, in one night, throng the pawnbroker's shop we have indicated. What an ignominious crowd to contemplate! Two or three co-operative stores in that neighbourhood would do more to thin the deplorable throng than all the moralists, philosophers, professors of political economy, and preachers London could furnish. These stores ought to be promulgated by missionary zeal, and men might give themselves to the work, as to a great religious duty.

If gentlemen had taken to co-operative trading with a view to elevate it, and improve shopkeeping by improving the taste of purchasers, by the gradual introduction of becoming colours and qualities, and articles of honest manufacture, no words of honour would be too strong to apply to such amateur shopkeepers. Some years ago I made an appeal[1] to the piety of

[1] *Vide* letter to *Pall Mall Gazette*.

London to do something practical in the name of faith. A few congregations in every district of the far-extending metropolis might unite in setting up a good co-operative store. If deacons, elders, lady visitors, and local missionaries were to visit the poor of the neighbourhood with half as much interest in the welfare of their bodies as that they display for the health of their souls, they would soon have thousands of poor members at their co-operative store. If they saved the profits of the poor for them, and encouraged them to permit the slow accumulation, they would teach them in time the holy art of thrift and independence. If the wealthy members chose to deal at the stores and save their profits, not for the baser reason of adding to already sufficient gains, but for the purpose of devoting them to works of art, or to that charity which helps the unfortunate and does not make mendicants, they might do good with dignity, and do it without cost.

CHAPTER XXVI

METROPOLITAN PROPAGANDISM

"I regard social schemes as one of the most valuable elements of human improvement."—JOHN STUART MILL, *Political Economy*.

LONDON has started more co-operative societies and projects than any city ten times told. If it has not succeeded with them, it has enabled others to do so. It may be held that it has had real co-operative enthusiasm and enterprise. Somebody must go forward with an ideal, which the "practical" people carry out, but rarely have the capacity to discover for themselves; and when they succeed, they are apt to disparage the thinkers who inspired them.

The vicissitudes of Co-operation in the metropolis would be an instructive narrative in itself. In several parts of England societies formed in the Pioneer period, and before it, continue to exist. In London no society formed in those days has continued. There was an intermittent platform advocacy of it at the old Hall of Science, City Road (rented mainly by Mr. Mordan, of gold-pen repute, for Mr. Rowland Detroiser to lecture in), when physical science really was taught there; and industrial advocacy was continuous and incessant on the platform at the John Street Institution, Tottenham Court Road, and at the Cleveland Hall, hard by, for a time. Indeed, in every hall—in Theobald's Road, Gray's Inn Road, in Goswell Road, Islington, Whitechapel, Hackney, Blackfriars Road, in the Rotunda in the days of Carlile, Queen Street, Charlotte Street, at Castle Street, Oxford Street, and subsequently at the new Hall of Science, in Old Street, St. Luke's, and in every Free Thought or Secular Hall which has been occupied

in the metropolis—co-operative advocacy has more or less been heard.

It was in London that the "British Association for the Diffusion of Co-operative Knowledge" was formed. It is the tendency of the metropolis to think more of disseminating true ideas than to profit by them. The tone of the metropolitan mind is imperial. Thinkers strive to act from London upon the empire. The best ideas do not often originate in London, but they receive a welcome there. Through the kindness of Dr. Yeats there has come to my hands "The Report of the Committee appointed by a Meeting of Journeymen, chiefly Printers," to consider the first systematic plan of Co-operation known to have been proposed. The plan was that of Mr. George Mudie. The second edition of the Report is dated January 23, 1821. The Report first appeared in 1820, and it speaks of having been long under consideration, so that as early as 1818 or 1819 Co-operation, as a "plan of arrangement" for working people, was formally put forth. Mr. Mudie is spoken of as having delivered discourses thereupon in the metropolis. Mr. Mudie's scheme was that of a community of goods; but the Committee proposed to adapt its co-operative features to friendly societies and working-men's clubs, which was done in 1821, and was the beginning of co-operative societies in London. The Report was signed by Robert Hunt, James Shallard, John Jones, George Hinde, Robert Dean, and Henry Hetherington. The Report is the ablest, least sentimental, the most clearly written and exhaustive—touching community schemes and co-operative application—I have met with in the early literature of the movement.

One passage, which expresses the first conception formed of that practical Co-operation which we now know, will enable the reader to judge this remarkable Report "It appears to us that the principle of Co-operation is susceptible of many modifications. In some cases its benefits could only be partially obtained. Wherever Friendly Societies or Benefit Clubs exist, the members would do well to form themselves into associations for reaping the advantages of this plan. In some cases it might be merely practicable to unite a portion of their earnings, for the purchase in the best markets, of certain articles of provision or clothing; while in other cases where the parties inhabit

contiguous dwellings, some of the advantages resulting from the subdivision of domestic labour might also be secured, and erections adapted for the purposes of cooking and washing be made at the back of one or more of the dwellings at a small expense.[1] If men can be brought seriously and earnestly to consider how they can unite their talents, experiences, and pecuniary resources to attain advantages in which each should equitably participate, they will assuredly succeed in improving their condition; and if by any economical arrangements the earnings of individuals in question can be made to produce a greater quantity of articles of consumption than is to be obtained on the plan of each individual catering for his own family, the effect will be the same as would follow an increase of wages or a decrease of taxes."

The Home Colonisation Society, of which Mr. William Galpin was the chief promoter, and to which Mr. Frederick Bate was the chief subscriber, was formed in London twenty years later, 1840–1. The first Central Board of the Society had offices in the metropolis for some years in Bloomsbury Square, and the *New Moral World* was printed by Ostell, round the corner in Hart Street.

The Christian Socialists of London took the field on behalf of Co-operation, 1848–9. The higher aims they put before and kept before co-operators[2] have made their influence the most fortunate which has befallen the movement. It was in Charlotte Street, which Mr. Owen had previously made famous, that the barristers' and clergymen's co-operative movement commenced, the said Christian Socialist organisation of a Central Co-operative Agency and Working Men's Associations. Having fortune, learning, and influence, they attracted important attention to the subject, and issued publications explanatory of their intentions. With generosity and zeal and at great cost, the work was conducted.

From 1850 to 1855 attempts were made in London to establish a Wholesale Supply Association, under the name of the Universal Purveyor, for the manufacture, preparation, and sale of food, drinks, and drugs, guaranteed against adulteration and fraud, and just in purity, quality, weight, measure, and

[1] Baths and washing-houses were not invented then.

[2] See Lecture to the Guild of Co-operators, Exeter Hall, London, by Thomas Hughes, Q.C., 1878

price. The commencing capital was £10,000 in 1,000 shares of £10. The project lasted in force but a few years. M. Jules le Chevalier St. Andre, formerly a St. Simonian enthusiast, but not at all an enthusiast in London, but a very obese and accomplished projector, was concerned in both these schemes. The chief supporter of the Purveyor was the Rev. C. Marriott, who at that time was Dean of Oriel, Oxford. He was certainly a clergyman of great disinterestedness, who ran great pecuniary risks, and incurred several losses to serve others. M. St. Andre had a masterly way of putting a case which would interest a clergyman like Charles Marriott. It was not until after much money had been lost in Charlotte Street, Fitzroy Square, and the business there was ended, that M. St. Andre commenced his "Universal Purveyor" at 23, King William Street. In one of his last circulars he said, "The most obstructive difficulty was inherent to the state of the English law, whereby it was not possible to take part in any enterprise, admitting of some risk, without being entrapped, as it were, into *unlimited* responsibility. The unalterable faith in God, which has supported me through all the apparent hopelessness of a righteous cause, strengthens in me every day more and more the belief that by coming forward personally as trustee, and financially with every means he could place at my disposal, the Rev. C. Marriott has laid the foundation of an institution pregnant of important results. The Rev. C. Marriott was perfectly aware that as a trustee he would have been made responsible with us. But there was no other means of doing what he thought his duty, and he did it. Thank God, he has come out safe, after enabling us to reach the time when the principle of limited liability has been introduced in the English law."

All that relates to Mr. Marriott was true and most honourable to him. What it cost him to "come out safe" is not stated. Gentlemen more experienced in the world, and more in it than Mr. Marriott, had found that "an unalterable trust in God," while very well in its place, may be very costly in business, unless accompanied by secular qualifications. St. Andre well knew this, and also understood what a Wholesale Agency should be, and his description of it is worth preserving. Its conditions were these :—

1. An extent of operations embracing the supply of all articles for domestic consumption. 2. Making the guarantee of purity, quality, quantity, and fair price the special duty and responsibility of the establishment. 3. Selling on commission only, and not making any speculative profits. 4. Extensive warehouses for examining and testing the goods before packing and delivery. 5. The most perfect machinery for weighing, packing, and labelling large quantities of parcels of every description. 6. Organisation of a Commission of Referees, composed of professional men of the highest standing. 7. Appointed buyers, morally responsible to the public. 8. A strong body of respectable servants as clerks, travellers, packers, warehousemen, pledged to certain modes of dealing, thoroughly impressed with the fact that they are on public duty.[1]

Years after the disappearance of the Working Men's Associations founded by the Christian Socialists, I and Mr. E. R. Edger held meetings at "The Raglan" (Mr. Jagger's coffee-house), 71, Theobald's Road. The object of these meetings was to suggest a plan of combined action for all the London stores, and to invite their co-operation in circulating an address to the people with the object of increasing the members and custom of every store. There were then some twenty or thirty stores in London, scattered and isolated. Mr. Ebenezer Edger, Mr. E. O. Greening, and I published the *Social Economist*, 1868, for the purpose of promoting organisation among these stores; Mr. Edger wrote a wise series of tracts for circulation among the members. By the generous aid of a munificent friend of Co-operation—always nameless, but incessant in service—Mr. Greening and I continued, in London, the *Social Economist*, which for a considerable period sought to inform co-operators of the nature of Continental thought, as respects the organisation of social life and labour. It was subsequently discontinued on behalf of the *Co-operative News*, that there might be unity and greater interest in the new journal then projected. A "London Association for the Promotion of Co-operation" was in operation in 1863. Mr. J. S. Mill, Professsor F. W. Newman, and Mr. E.

[1] Neither the Christian Socialists with whom he was first connected nor I, who had later relations with him, had any idea that he was a spy in pay of the French Emperor, as appeared when the people came into possession of his papers in the Tuileries.

Vansittart Neale permitted their names to be announced as honorary members. The committee was composed of officers of these existing co-operative societies. It was stated by this body that there were at that time "forty societies in London and its vicinity."

The establishment of the Agricultural and Horticultural Co-operative Association in London devised by Mr. Edward Owen Greening, Mr. Walter Morrison, M.P., Thomas Hughes, M.P., and the Hon. Mr. Cowper-Temple, M.P., other gentlemen being directors, gave practical Co-operation position in the metropolis. The progress of this association is as remarkable as that of any society extant, considering that it occupied an entirely new field, and sought members among the farmers of England, who do not take readily to new ideas. Mr. E. O. Greening, the manager, being possessed of real co-operative knowledge, skilled in devising new applications of it, and of zeal and capacity in advocacy, exercised considerable propagandist influence in London. This Agricultural Association has maintained a standard of co-operative principle which has been effective upon the Civil Service societies in some instances. Mr. Greening and others caused the formation of a Co-operative Institute in Castle Street, in a large building formerly the Concert Room of the Princess's Theatre, Oxford Street. The names of Thomas Brassey, M.P., the Earl of Rosebery, and Arthur Trevelyan appear among the promoters, in addition to other well-known friends of industrial endeavour, as Walter Morrison, Charles Morrison, and the Right Hon. Cowper-Temple, M.P. The *Daily News* gave a comprehensive account of it, saying: "This Co-operative Institute is not, as might be inferred from the name, a trading company, but a society formed to organise the means of pure and elevating enjoyment, members' subscriptions being applied to educational or recreative purposes. . . . It provides the advantages of lectures, concerts, the use of Mudie's books, a reading-room, and, as far as possible, the usual adjuncts of a club. There are occasionally social evenings for dancing, but no intoxicants are permitted, and admission is limited to members." The Central Co-operative Board and some societies made subscriptions to it.

A Central Co-operative Agency Society, Limited, was established in London for the sale of co-operative manufactures

and provisions, wholesale and retail. An excellent thing is at times set going, but few devote themselves to seeing it go and taking care that it does go.

The Agricultural Association built a council-room in Millbrook Street; the Central Board of the Southern Section sat there and devised a Metropolitan Co-operative Society, one object being to open stores in suitable districts. These stores were to be supplied with provisions from the Manchester Wholesale. So comprehensive a scheme was impossible before the Branch of the Manchester Wholesale was opened at 118, Minories, now 99, Leman Street, London. Mr. William Openshaw is now the manager.

Since 1875 the proceedings of the Annual Congress have been regulated by the laws of a Co-operative Union adopted at the London Congress in that year. This Union prescribes the conditions under which societies may become members of it, and send delegates to it. It appoints a Central Board which officially governs the proceedings of the united co-operative body. Sectional Boards meet in various districts. Delegates from each of these Boards meet periodically in Manchester to transact the general business of the Union under the name of the United Board.

"This Union is formed to promote the practice of truthfulness, justice, and economy in production and exchange—

"(1) By the abolition of all false dealing, either—

"*a. Direct*, by representing any article produced or sold to be other than what it is known to the producer or vendor to be; or

"*b. Indirect*, by concealing from the purchaser any fact known to the vendor material to be known by the purchaser, to enable him to judge of the value of the article purchased.

"(2) By conciliating the conflicting interests of the capitalist, the worker, and the purchaser, through an equitable division among them of the fund commonly known as *Profit*.

"(3) By preventing the waste of labour, now caused by unregulated competition.

"[The Union does not affect to determine precisely what division of this fund shall be considered *equitable*, believing that this is a question admitting of different solutions, under different circumstances, and not to be concluded by any hard-and-fast line. But it insists on the recognition of the principle.]"

Mr. Hodgson Pratt, a ceaseless worker for social improvement, not merely doing with zeal what routine work may come before him in the movements he assists, but assiduously devising new methods of advancing the objects in view, projected a Co-operative Guild for the purpose of creating an organised propagandism of principles of Industrial Association. At the Glasgow Congress of 1876 it was first agreed to form a Guild on the plan of the ancient societies of that name. It was proposed by myself to give effect to a striking paper on Propagandism read by Mr. Joseph Smith, secretary to the Manchester Board. The draft of the Guild was signed by G. J. Holyoake, A. Greenwood, W. Nuttall, J. Smith, E. V. Neale, J. Crabtree, J. M. Percival, H. J. Wiley.

This "Guild of Co-operative Pioneers" was intended to comprise a Master of the Guild, and (1) Associates examined in Co-operative Principle; (2) Companions examined in Methods of Co-operative Procedure; (3) Administrators examined in the Government of Societies; (4) Members examined in policy and debate in Societies and Congress. The object of this Guild was to train a body of persons in every town who should possess usefulness and authority, by reason of their known devotion and ascertained qualifications.

Mr. Hodgson Pratt's scheme was originated quite independently. It commenced in March, 1878, after a series of four lectures in Exeter Hall; the first being delivered by Thomas Hughes, Q.C., on the History of Co-operation, Mr. Hodgson Pratt presiding.

Spurious Co-operation became a fashion in London with pretended "Co-operative Shops." A single adventurer multiplied himself into a Firm, and announced himself as a "Co-operative Company." Fictitious "Co-operative Banks" made their appearance. Mr. Richard Banner Oakley failed in many attempts to get the Congress to recognise him, or the Central Board, or the *Co-operative News* to countenance his operations. No store ever had dealings with him. The outside public, from treating Co-operation with ignorant distrust, at last believed in it with an ignorant credulity. When he invented his Co-operative Credit Bank, papers spoke of it as an instance of "Co-operative credulity," whereas

the co-operators were the only persons who had no faith in it.

There was a Co-operative Coal Society in Chancery Lane, London, managed by Mr. Julius Forster. Deficiency of fuel means increased contagion, premature death to the old, and privation in many ways. To help to avert this, in the days of the coal famine, the Co-operative Coal Supply Association held a Conference in Millbank Street Hall, to promote co-operative coal-mining. In the North of England the working miners had then taken some coal royalties, and, with secured orders from London, they could work them with profit.

The Manchester Co-operative Fire Insurance Society (which has shown a growing prosperity for years), of which Mr. James Odgers is secretary, has its head office in Long Millgate, Manchester. This Society, commenced in 1872, also issues Guarantees of Fidelity of Servants of Co-operative Societies. It has also a Life Department.

It is one of the pleas for the inability of London to co-operate that the population is transitory. Still householders remain pretty constant. Population, which seems fluctuating under facilities of transit and emigration, resembles the deposits at a bank. Though withdrawable on demand a profitable proportion of money always remains on hand. It is the same with workmen. Great numbers expect to live in the place in which they were born or have settled; as witness the statements made at the meeting of "The British Association"[1] at Bradford in 1873, that the following building societies,[2] composed mainly of working people, had these members and income in 1872:—

Title of Society.	Members.	Funds.
		£
Bradford Second Equitable	6,277	265,000
Bradford Third Equitable	7,200	537,000
Leeds Permanent	12,020	365,000
Leeds Provincial	5,250	200,000
Halifax Permanent	6,167	174,000

[1] The association of the eight-worded name "for the advancement of science."

[2] The five societies are those cited by Mr. A. Binns at Bradford.

These masses of membership do not look like a flying population. If as much interest was taken in co-operative as in religious propagandism, and a hundred members of any congregation were to guarantee to buy not less than £1 worth of goods weekly from its store, the storekeepers might undertake to contribute £1,000 every four years to the income of the Church.

CHAPTER XXVII

SOCIAL POLICY OF CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES

"He neither power nor places sought,
For *others* not himself he fought.
He might have been a king,
But that he understood
How much it was a meaner thing
To be unjustly great—than honourably good."
The Duke of Buckingham's Epitaph on Lord Fairfax

THE noblest scheme of liberty or set of rules in the world will be dead letters unless men with a passion for the right carry them out. The right men are known by the policy they pursue. Some men profess not to know what policy is. Yet they know that if a man wishes to appear superior to his neighbours without trouble, his policy is not to work. If his intention is not to work, his policy is to live by borrowing as less dangerous but not less dishonest than stealing. But if a man intends to live by industry and to get on by good sense, he adopts certain rules of probity and usefulness, and integrity and service constitute his policy.

Co-operation implies a training in the unknown art of association. The earlier advocates of industrial equity had everything to learn, and to fight their way step by step in the shop, in the market, on the platform, and in the press. The instructed seldom befriended them, and adversaries never gave them quarter. In this solitary contention they discovered some facts of the policy of success.

1. Never to conceal what ought, in business, honestly to be made known, nor communicate to assailants outside business, what is no business of theirs.

Catlin tells us that the astute American Indian always keeps his mouth shut, until he has some purpose in opening it ; and the Indian mother watches her boy while he sleeps, carefully closing his lips, if apart, that he may acquire the habit of keeping them shut night and day, as audible breathing may one day betray him in his lair. There are men in every movement who always have their mouths open. It may be owing to mere labial deficiency, or to their having had parents who knew nothing of the importance of educated habit ; but to the spectator it seems a sign of vacuity or foolishness. Some of the early Socialists had this peculiarity, not from physical but intellectual deficiency in the power of reticence. Speech escaped from them without calculation of its relevancy or use. Co-operation still suffers from a suicidal publicity. If some rival firm refuses to sell to them provisions or materials they go to the expense of printing a circular about it, or put it in a paper and circulate the fact that they are disabled from carrying on their business. They thus cause adversaries to combine against them, and then squeal out when the pressure is put upon them, although they inform their own connection that they are disabled ; thus they minister to the personal triumph as well as business success of their clever and reticent adversaries, who know better how to close their mouths and work in the shade. Co-operators know that competition is a battle in which there are few scruples and no quarter, and yet many of them chatter as though it was a tea-party. It is the same in Radicalism, where publicity is a disease instead of a purpose. It is the malady of inexperience. Conservative working men are as bad when they are allowed to speak. What matters it to co-operators if the enemy close the markets where they must purchase provisions to distribute, or materials with which to conduct productive manufactures ? This can be overcome in commerce and trade by establishing wholesale societies, and entering the markets with means of making large purchases. Theological alarm is far more implacable than that of business. Defamation is conveyed down a thousand devious lines of prejudice, where stately and friendless truth is too proud, too scornful, or too poor to follow it ; and there it lives till Time starves it, or the contempt of a second and better-instructed generation kills it.

2. The co-operator makes no proclamation as to his religious opinions, and treats any demand of the kind as a social outrage. Religion, in the sense of reverence for truth, is confined to a few persons in every generation. With this religion of the understanding Co-operation is wholly coincident. The most human parts of the Bible are those which express sympathy for the poor. Co-operation respects this sympathy, but objects to being poor, and holds that there is neither need, nor use, nor good in being poor. When a man discovers that the established measurement of truth is wrong, and announces one more accurate, men put him down as being no better than he should be, which merely means that he is nearer to the reality of things than his neighbours.

3. Self-helping in all things, the co-operator chooses his own principles, and answers for them himself. The poorer sort of persons with new ideas are eager to have them discussed. It is their only chance of getting attention. To accomplish this they must uphold the principle of free discussion. Yet discussion once sanctioned in any party, all sorts of questions are raised, and the responsibility of the opinions advanced is, in a manner, diffused over the whole party who uphold the principle. Hence Co-operation, in its early days, was charged with complicity with every utopianism of the hour, discussed in its halls, or advocated by its supporters. Of course this mistake would not be made about it, if the public discriminated ; but the public is a creature which never does discriminate. Not only do co-operators suffer from misconception, but philosophers suffer from it. John Stuart Mill was a memorable instance of this ; because he wrote letters on behalf, or on some occasions gave support to, persons whose views the public did not like, it was assumed that Mr. Mill did like them. This did not by any means follow. Mr. Mill believed that progress needed to be promoted, and that it was retarded by persons not saying what they thought right, and by not acting upon it when they had said it. He therefore encouraged this being done, without at all agreeing with the particular views of each individual, or his mode of carrying them out.

The men who inspired the co-operative movement, who believed in it when no one else did, whose intrepidity and

persistence have been the cause of its success, were men who held no second-hand opinions, but debated out for themselves what they sought to know, and had to depend upon. So vigilant were they that they never suffered any speaker to address an audience in their name, unless he submitted what he said to criticism and opportunity of refutation. They regarded as a deceiver or a traitor any who sought to impose upon them opinions he did not invite them to verify and enable them to do it.

4. To regard every member as actuated by veracity and right intentions, and in case of difference of opinion to reason with them as being in error—not as being base. So solicitous were the early co-operators for neutrality in imputation that they prohibited all praise or blame, in order that the mind being kept passionless, might move in the equable plane of simple truth. Certainly no signs of approval or disapproval kept a speaker quiet, but it made him dull. He never knew whether he was a fool or a wit. He might as well have addressed so many bales of cotton, as a neutral audience of social improvers of this way of thinking. Other and wiser exactions were made. Whoever spoke among them was forbidden to be imputative. He was told to pity the vituperative assailant (to whom neither Nature nor culture had given sense or taste) not to imitate him. Thirty years before Mr. Matthew Arnold pointed out that Paul, when he called his adversaries "dogs" and "vain babblers," had no chance of convincing them, nor had Christ any chance of gaining the Scribes and Pharisees by the invectives he launched at them when he abandoned his mild, uncontentious, winning mode of working. "*He shall not strive or cry*" was his true characteristic, in which all his charm and power lay. Thirty years ere this was said co-operators were taught consideration in speech, and it was known among them that denunciation of persons was the cheapest, easiest, most popular, and most unwholesome use to which the human tongue could be put, and that the wanton imputation of evil motives to others was an abuse of free speech. Defamation of motives assume an infallibility of discernment which no man is endowed with, and denotes utter ignorance of the duty of exposition and of the art of persuading the minds of men.

Those who seek the truth, and care for the truth, are traitors to it when they employ unfairness of terms. He who is imputative and unjust of speech, turns men from him for ever, and is not long credited himself with purity of motive. So sharply should consequence be connected with conduct, that a brutal sincerity should be held as much a betrayal of the truth as the denial of it; for he who denies it merely hides it, while he who makes it offensive makes it to be hated. The moment an unjust imputation is made ill-feeling begins, and the wisdom or error of any step is at once lost sight of. The moment personalities are permitted, the tongue of every fool is loosened, and floods of resentment and rancour drown all argument and arrest all concert.

Mr. John Holmes, who has published some wise conditions of co-operative success, errs in one where he prescribes, "Forbearance towards each other's *disinterested* opinions." Now co-operators have nothing to do with the question whether the opinions of their colleagues are *interested* or "disinterested," but simply with the truth and value of their opinions. Any question as to the motives or "disinterestedness" of the opinions is the beginning of disunion and of imputation, which kills concord.

A hearty geniality is of great value in co-operative societies. A business watchfulness which never sleeps, and a pleasantry of manner which never fails, are qualities above all value in a co-operator in office. His smile is a public gift, the tone of his voice is an act of friendship. A hard man, with a sharp tongue and a short temper, is a local misfortune, diffusing discomfort wherever he treads. I know entire towns which never had a genial man in them—where every speech is an attack, every suggestion a suspicion, and every meeting a conflict. Co-operation in these places is always rheumatic and unhappy—labouring under a sort of suppressed social gout. Not that I object to grumblers; if they have any sense they are an uncomfortable kind of benefactors. No English society would do without them. They act as a sort of Spanish muleteer—they prick slow animals with long ears over rough places. It must be confessed they are rather apt to overdo it, and make the patient, steady-working, good-natured animal bolt, and then they ruin everything.

5. To constantly remember that there is no one, not a fool, who would not be wiser and better than he is, had he the choice; and that the disagreeable, the wrong-headed, and the base are to be regarded as unfortunate rather than hateful. Leigh Hunt well expressed this when he said, "Let us agree to consider the errors of mankind as proceeding more from defect of knowledge than defect of goodness." Those who learned this, and those alone, have given permanence to the co-operative movement. Those who never knew it, or who, knowing it, have forgotten it, flounder for ever between hatred and hope.

Long before the Welsh reformer, Robert Owen, was born, Goldsmith had said, without censure, that "had Cæsar or Cromwell exchanged countries, the one might have been a sergeant and the other an exciseman." Owen did but suggest the undeniable conclusion that in such case Cromwell would have been a Pagan and Cæsar a Puritan; and therefore co-operators should meet in stores or communities men of every sect, without hostility or dislike—since particular faiths are to be honoured as far as they make men into brethren, and are to be accepted by all who deem them true; while their special varieties are to be equally regarded as arising in geographical or chronological accidents, and not to be ascribed to sin. Co-operation would be impossible if its disciples stooped to sectarian antipathies and spoke of each other with the bitterness with which Sir John Bowring found the Chief Priest of the Samaritans of Sychar speaks of the Jews. It was the knowledge given to co-operators of the human burden of inherited incapacity that imparted to them that great strength of patience and charity of judgment which enabled their societies to endure, while the retaliating and fiercer political and religious parties around them fought themselves out. Those who look may see that the same nature is master of us all; that individual man and diversified races, every sect and every opinion, every passion and every act, are the product of a tireless destiny, which went before, and of circumstances which follow after, besetting us at every step—now inspiring the lofty, anon inflaming the base, making men objects of gladness or pity; saving the high, who know it, from pride; protecting the low from scorn and despair; striking or serving

us, just as we are wise, to study the ways and observe the methods of Nature. Those who learn this know no more haste or apathy, foolish hatred or foolish despair.

Co-operators will never remain leal and true to their society unless a foundation which never gives way is laid in the understanding. You cannot command unity, no exhortation will produce it. By mere business sense a member will put up with some failure or loss, or with inferior commodities at times, for the advantage which can be had in the main by holding together. By mere business sense he will not expect too much; he will know that success comes little by little, and generally arrives late and takes disagreeable caprices on the way. By mere business sense a man may be found in his place on dividend day. But more than this will be wanted to make him a pleasant, ardent, and continuous associate. If he is made aware that wrong-headed people mostly had that twist before they were born—that the querulous man has vinegar nerves, which he would be glad to exchange for the olive-oil sort—that a conceited associate has gas on the brain which inflates all his faculties and makes him think they are solid because they feel big—he will be tolerant and steadfast when others turn aside offended. Half the irritation we feel at the errors and angular ways of others arises from forgetting that we ourselves are not infallible, and have stupid and ungracious intervals like others.

6. A fool cannot be a co-operator, and since those who know everything do not remember it always, every one should be instructed and kept instructed in what he is expected to act upon. Co-operators have made money by their method of business, they have won honours by being the first of the working class who cared for self-education as a higher form of property. Aristipus having counselled a father to seek a good tutor for his son, was asked what would that amount to? He answered, "A hundred crowns." The father, thinking the sum large, replied that "such a sum might buy him a slave." "Well," said Aristipus, "bestow your money so and you shall have two slaves, the one your ill-bred son and the other he whom you buy for your money."[1]

The Church for a long time disliked education as tending to make the lower orders unmanageable, and the Dissenters

[1] "Thoughts on Education," by Bishop Burnet.

feared it as making them carnal-minded—not seeing that the intellectual must always be more spiritual than the ignorant: but the Co-operators had no dislike of it, no misgiving about it. It was to them a means of self-defence. In 1835 Mr. Owen announced that he had received £500 for the purpose of "commencing a school on the most scientific principles for the children of co-operators and £2,000 more were to be had to extend a knowledge of sciences among the people." The co-operators made schools for mechanics popular. Sixty years ago co-operators were in advance of the nation now, in proposing the best instruction for the humblest.

Knowledge is the same thing to the understanding as the eye is to the body. Knowledge is the sight of the mind. All knowledge which throws light on what a man has to do is of the nature of outside help to him. A mind of few ideas is as a short lever: it can move only little things; while a mind of many ideas has a longer leverage, and can move larger obstacles out of its way. Thus knowledge of the right kind is plainly a good investment.

Every human society in which life and property were in daily peril has found law and order worth paying for. Those who believe that things will last their time still have misgivings for their children.

It was one of Mr. Owen's practical merits that he foresaw that considerations for the security of society in the future, paid in the present. He had not, like Fairfax, the opportunity of being a king, but he might have been known as the richest of manufacturers had he not preferred something higher.

Co-operators knew that it was the want of intelligence that kept up ugliness in life. Beauty in art, order in cities, grace of action, good manners, all pay; only few persons know them as things of value. One reason is that the majority of persons never have the means of buying perfect things. They are obliged to do without them, and naturally do not regard them as otherwise they would. Persons who have anything to spend and only spend it in buying mere sensual pleasure, have the minds of animals, not the minds of men. Scientific knowledge and literary knowledge is now provided more or less. Board Schools, Art Schools, Science Classes, Technical and other colleges are now open to working men.

But education in probity, in self-possession, in courtesy, in pride of workmanship, in public spirit, in public duty, in citizenship, where are they taught? Co-operators can only acquire such knowledge by keeping Libraries, News Rooms, Lecture Halls at their own command, and for their own use. A recent writer has shown that in Civil Service Examinations none are examined in manliness, good sense, or the elements of personal character.[1] Mr. Brudenell Carter has proved that there is no over-work within the limits of daily strength. Within those limits work is a condition of health. The idle die of idleness. Many more than are imagined die of acquired stupidity. Of course there are a good many people who do not need to acquire stupidity, they always have a stock on hand. He is base who, having principles he knows to be useful to others, does not endeavour to diffuse them; and since Co-operation becomes more profitable as more persons engage in it, it is want of sense not to extend it.

Co-operation is liable, in one place or other, to be overrun by those who see with selfish eyes an escape from misery with money in it, and see nothing else in it. Co-operation, like the corn-laden caravans of merchants in the desert, is seized upon by marauding bands, who carry off treasures intended for honest sale. No sooner is it discerned that Co-operation creates wealth than swarms of mercenaries swoop down upon it, to avail themselves of it as a means of gain, caring nothing for the social education and equality it was intended to promote.

If no educational fund was devised in the infancy of a society, often no will is strong enough, no reason can prevail, to retrace the deplorable step. Ignorance grows upon a society as age upon an individual. It stiffens its limbs, it bows its head, it dims its sight, it enfeebles its mind, until it retains nothing but the courage of cupidity; and to gratify that it walks in ignoble ruts all its days. Such a society may grow, but it has no soundness; its largeness is puffiness, and a shock of adversity may bring it at once under the hands of the fiscal coroner who sits in the Bankruptcy Court. As it commanded no respect in its day, no one mourned its demise. Since you cannot make co-operators out of simpletons, it is

[1] "Essay on Commissions," by John S. Storr.

prudent to take care that they do not overrun the society. Cæsar, we are told, lamented that he could proceed no faster on his victorious march than the asses who carried his baggage could travel. The progress of most societies is often retarded by the same kind of animals. The best directors are always hampered by want of more intelligence among the members. The ignorant do not understand their own interest, nor how to support those who do. Stores whose members are unvaccinated with business intelligence are sure to break out with the smallpox of ignorance sooner or later; some have it in a very bad form, and some die of it. Lectures and literature must be supplied for information. The brain, like the body, is starved if not fed with ideas. The thought is thin, the language is lean, the logic is limp, the illustrations rheumatic, and can hardly stand upright.

The co-operator cannot, like the theologian, increase the income of the working class by prayer. He works by human arrangements, economy, and sagacity, and it is only those who have confidence in these means that have enthusiasm in extending Co-operation. It was the first murderer, Cain, who asked, "Am I my brother's keeper?" The co-operator cannot keep his brother, but he has a strong interest in enabling his brother to keep himself, and he knows the way, and knowing it, if he does not exert himself to make it known to others, who may be lost through not seeing it, he is a murderer by his neglect.

CHAPTER XXVIII

INDUSTRIAL PARTNERSHIP

"It is a natural and not an unreasonable wish for every man to form that he should have some interest in, and some control over, the work on which he is employed. It is human nature, I think, that a man should like to feel that he is to be a gainer by any extra industry that he may put forth, and that he should like to have some sense of proprietorship in the shop, or mill, or whatever it may be, in which he passes his days. And it is because the system introduced of late years of co-operative industry meets that natural wish that I look forward to its extension with so much hopefulness. I believe it is the best, the surest remedy for that antagonism of labour and capital."—EARL DERBY (then Lord Stanley) at Opening of the Liverpool Trades Hall, October, 1869.

ONE form of Industrial Partnership is a business in which the employers pay to the hands a portion of profits made in addition to their wages, on the supposition that the men will create the said profit by increased interest and assiduity in their work.

M. Le Comte de Paris, the author of a wise and readable book on Trades Unions, describes "Co-operative Societies for production as transforming the workman into a capitalist by securing to him a *share* of the profits of the undertaking in which he has invested the capital of his labour." A co-operative workshop does more, it divides not a share, but *all* the profits among the producers.[1]

Earl Derby was distinguished among public men by the faculty of seeing a question from which he may dissent from the point of view of those who accept it; and such is his clearness of statement that those who listen to him find their own case put as it were by themselves, when they see it most completely and state it best to their own satisfaction. The question of industrial partnerships is contained in the fol-

[1] "Trades Unions of England," p. 214. Edited by Thomas Hughes, Q.C.

lowing passage from the speech mentioned at the head of this chapter :—

"In participation there are losses as well as gains; but the very fact that these occur will make the men who share in them understand and feel better than they ever did before the responsibilities and the difficulties of the employer; and if, as is quite possible, many having felt its difficulties, prefer the certainty and security of fixed wages, they, at least, have had their choice between the two systems. It is quite probable that there are some trades, some kinds of businesses in which it cannot be brought about; but it seems to me that it is in that direction that the efforts of the best workers and the ideas of the best thinkers are tending, and we are not to be disheartened by a few failures, or disappointed because we do not at once hit on the best way of doing what has never been done before."

Partnership in industry seems to have entered the Irish mind before it did the English, if regard be had to legislative evidence. In Dublin as early as 1788 there was "issued by George Grierson, printer to the King's Most Excellent Majesty" (there has been a good deal of Majesty since 1788 which has not appeared "Most Excellent" to anybody), "an Act to promote Trade and Manufacture by regulating and encouraging partnerships." The words "Chap. XLVI." were annexed thereto. Its preamble set forth that "whereas the increasing the stock of money employed in Trade and Manufacture must greatly promote the commerce and prosperity of this kingdom, and many persons might be induced to subscribe sums of money to men well qualified for trade (but not of competent fortune to carry it on largely) if they (the subscribers) were allowed to abide by the profit or loss of the trade for the same, and were not to be deemed Traders on that account or subject thereby to any further or other demands than the sums so subscribed." This is excellently put. The whole theory of joint-stock partnerships is here. Mr. Schofield, M.P. for Birmingham, when he carried his Bill in the English House of Commons eighty years later, could not have constructed a more relevant preamble. Though valuable in its way, joint-stock partnership is not Co-operation.

It was Mr. Owen, at Lanark, who first showed masters what they might, with honour and profit, do by voluntary partnership with those they employed. The law did not permit participation of profit with workmen in those days. It could only be done in the form of gifts. Only patronage Co-operation was possible. Mr. Owen made these in the form of education, recreation, improved dwellings, and increased wages. All these were revocable—the law forbade contracts of participation with workmen. Industrial equity bore the name of benevolence, and dividends of profit reached workmen in the form of a discriminating charity.

Mr. Owen was a Paternalist. He believed in the general goodness of humanity, and that goodness could guide it; but he had no conviction that it could guide itself.

Industrial Partnerships owe to Fourier the principle of making labour attractive instead of repulsive, and of distributing the profits in proportion to the capital, skill, and labour, contributed by each; Fourier made definite the idea of labour becoming the partner of capital, instead of merely its servant.

It is, however, to the practical genius of an Englishman, Mr. Charles Babbage, that we owe the earliest proposal, made by a writer of repute in England, in favour of workmen being associated as participators in the profits of a manufactory. On the south coast of England it was known that one-half of all the fish caught belonged to the owner of the boat and the net, the other half being divided in equal portions among the fishermen using the net and boat, they being bound to make repairs when needed. Cornish miners were paid in proportion to the richness and produce of the vein worked. Thus they naturally became quick-sighted in the discovery of lodes and in estimating their value, and it was their interest to avail themselves of every improvement in bringing the ore cheaply to the surface; Mr. Babbage therefore argued that if some joint participation of profit in manufactures was devised, the result of such arrangement would be :—

1. That every person engaged in it would have a *direct* interest in its prosperity; since the effect of any success would almost immediately produce a corresponding change in his own receipts.

2. Every person in the factory would have an immediate interest in preventing any waste or mismanagement in all the departments.

3. The talent of all connected with it would be strongly directed to its improvement.

4. When any additional hands were required, it would be the common interest of all to admit only the most skilful ; and it would be far less easy to impose upon a dozen workmen than upon the single proprietor of a factory.

5. And by no means least, there would be removed, by common consent, the causes which compel men to combine for their own separate interests.

It is said an Englishman never knows when he is beaten, but a workman of any sense does know when he has won, or when fairness of an employer has conceded to him the opportunity of benefit in the trade in which he is engaged. So that there would exist a union between employer and workman to overcome common difficulties and promote a common interest. Lieutenant Babbage, in a letter which I had the pleasure to receive from him, says that his father advised co-operative manufactories, as the chapter in his work shows, entitled "A New Manufacturing System."

Mr. Babbage's wise scheme met with very scant co-operative recognition. The Editor of the *New Moral World* saw no good that was likely to come of industrial partnerships. The scheme which has attained ascendancy and rendered great service to the working class, was dismissed with these discouraging editorial words, "As a temporary expedient we are very doubtful of the value of Mr. Babbage's plan, while as an adequate amelioration of the condition of the industrious classes, we can have no faith in schemes that render them dependent for subsistence on the chances of employment."[1]

The Chartists among the working class thought Free Trade a Whig scheme to deceive them ; Trade Unionists suspected it as a contrivance to get more work out of them. No attention was paid by any manufacturer to this sensible and well-put plan. Mr. Babbage might as well have spoken down a well, as far any response was concerned. Nobody then had any real confidence in mutual relations between

[1] *New Moral World*, p. 197, vol. iii.

capital and labour. But it remains an encouraging fact that a great mathematician should give the actual details of the industrial policy of the future as exact as the calculation of the appearance of a new planet.

In some cases employers pay large wages from pure good-will to their men, or provide news-rooms, or dining-rooms, or schools, or provide them with good habitations at low rents, or pension old workmen, or contribute to provident or other societies for their personal advantage. Such employers do virtually establish an industrial partnership, of good-will though not of right.

Lord Brassey evidently takes more than his father's interest in the commercial welfare and industrial security of the working class. He pointed out in his Halifax address how it comes to pass that "the rich, gathering themselves together in the most eligible situation in every town, the price of land becomes so enormous that it is impossible to erect houses at rates which, while not exceeding what workmen can afford to pay, will be remunerative to the owners and builders. Hence the working class are compelled to occupy more remote suburbs. They live in daily contact with no other class but their own, and a consequent danger is incurred of social disunion. This state of things is practically inevitable under our existing system." Then the existing system requires altering. In the town of Leicester the wealthier portion of the population have taken possession of all the higher and salubrious parts, and the poor have no choice but to live in the lower and unhealthier. Mr. Stansfeld, M.P., had in view to introduce a Bill to enable corporations to acquire land, in the vicinity of large towns, so as to secure the poorer population some opportunity of healthy existence. Undoubtedly "the tendency of modern industry," as Lord Brassey remarks, "has been, and will continue to be, towards the concentration of capital in large corporate or private establishments." There must be contrived some participation of these inexorable and unhinderable profits among the artisan class; else the many will have no choice but to combine against the few, and stop in some disagreeable way that which stops them from existing endurably.[1] Common

[1] J. S. Mill's proposal to tax unearned increments would diminish the evil.

people increasing in intelligence cannot be expected to perish in the sight of ever-increasing affluence, and die gratis.

The saying that "it is liberty which is old, and despotism which is new," oft recurs to a writer on industrial welfare. It seems a new thing to propose now that employers should be studious to provide for the welfare of those who labour. In Egypt the pyramids endure; the huts of the Fellahs, of the makers of bricks, have been destroyed and renewed a thousand times since Pentaour watched their misery. But other ancient nations showed noble regard for workmen. At Mocke the great pyramid of the Chimus remains built by the ancient Peruvians. The mighty Peruvian pyramid still stands imposing in its decay, and by it equally remain, no less permanent, the dwellings of the masons and metal workers, "organised," says a recent explorer, "with an order and a system which a Socialist phalanstery might despair of rivalling."[1] In all the dominions which the Incas ruled as monarchs or suzerains, this combination of love of display and care for the well-being of the humblest subjects, speaks of a wise consideration for the people.

A "sentimental" man is one who does what is right because it ought to be done. A "practical" man is one who does what is right because it pays. The practical man I respect becauses he raises Co-operation into the region in which it can live. The sentimental man I honour because he raises Co-operation above the region of dividends into the nobler region where the indispensable pursuit of gain is purified by the loftier feeling of duty. There are those who think a man "practical" who gets dividends anyhow. He who willingly does wrong because it pays, is a fool or a rascal. He may profit by it, but he fills his little money-bag with a scoundrel shovel; and the executive business of perdition will be very badly managed if there be not somebody's janissary on the other side the grave waiting for these knaves. Sentiment is as yet unmacadamised ground, and some stumble thereon. There is all the difference between light and twilight—of pursuing equity from a sense of justice and pursuing it for mere gain.

[1] Incidents of Travel and Exploration in the Land of the Incas (George Squiers, M.A.) See art. in *Saturday Review*.

Political economists, with a perspicacity unexercised until lately, now discern that "all extra remuneration that is awarded to labour in excess of the wages that are earned by labour is, in reality, given, not for the pure or simple labour itself, but for the greater skill, ability, knowledge, or intelligence with which it is accompanied; and these additional qualifications which accompany labour are regarded by Adam Smith as a species of capital that is fixed and realised in the persons of those who possessed them, and the value of which is to be estimated by their worth in simple labour." [1]

"Some years ago," says Dr. Doherty, "it was reported in the public press that a great saving of coke had been effected by the managers of the Belgian railways; the work formerly done by ninety-five tons now being accomplished with forty-eight tons. And this is the way in which the saving was made. It was known that the men who used the coke to heat the locomotives on the line were not careful of the fuel. Ninety-five kilogrammes of coke were consumed for every league of distance run, but this was known to be more than necessary; but how to remedy the evil was the problem. A bonus of 3½d. on every hectolitre of coke saved on this average of ninety-five to the league was offered to the men concerned, and this trifling bonus worked the miracle. The work was done equally well, or better, with forty-eight kilogrammes of coke, instead of ninety-five; nearly one-half, saved by careful work, at an expense of probably less than one-tenth of the saving." [2]

Mr. Thomas Hughes, writing to the *Pall Mall Gazette*, in reply to an article which suggested that if no profits were made at Methly there would be no means of paying the labourers, who while they would share the profits would not stand to any of the losses, remarks that "In the first year of the partnership a very considerable surplus profit may be made. By the articles, the board of directors—consisting of the former employers and several of their foremen—have the power of setting apart and investing a large proportion of these profits as a reserve fund, which may be used at any time in

[1] "Certain Practical Questions of Political Economy," by a former member of the Political Economy Club (Simpkin & Co., 1873).
[2] "Philosophy of History," Dr. Doherty, Fourierist.

aid of wages or in making up the fixed interest on invested capital in future years. If this power is exercised, and the first year or so is profitable I think the danger is overcome. I believe that as a rule the periods are not long during which a properly managed business does not return enough to pay the average rate of wages, and the interest on capital usual in the trade, be it 7 or 10 or 15 per cent. The reserve fund once established may fairly be looked to, to enable the partnership to tide over these slack times without a reduction of the wages of labour or the fixed interest on capital."

Lord George Manners, who projected an industrial partnership on his farm, answered a similar objection. He said, "True, I may have to pay wages some years when there has been a loss, but I do not forget that the best work the labourers could do may have decreased that loss, and in other years have increased my profits materially." This implied a generous feeling and perfect perception of the question.

In Leicester, at a "Treat" given by Messrs. W. Corah & Sons, hosiery manufacturers, to 450 of their workpeople, one of the firm said: "Masters are making profits, and it was nothing but right that those who worked for them should enjoy as far as possible their share of the profits (cheers). He took it that there were respective duties for employers." In the same town there are other employers who equally exemplify the sense of industrial equity. In the North capital as a rule bites. In Midland England it is friendly in tone to the workman. In Leicester Michael Wright & Sons made a deliberate effort to introduce the principles of industrial partnership into their Elastic Web Works, but did not find their efforts supported by their workpeople. In the same town Messrs. Gimson & Co. introduced it into their large engine works. They adopted the wise plan of first entrusting its operation to a selection of their leading workmen, to whom they offered the advantage of a share of the profits after the attainment of a fair dividend upon capital. To these selected workmen was left the power of nominating other workmen whom they discerned to be capable and willing to increase the prosperity of the company by zeal and judgment in the discharge of their duties.

This plan had the advantage of limiting the division of profits to those who showed increased efforts in augmenting them, and left the responsibility of excluding the indifferent to their fellow-workmen. Thus the opportunity was fairly given, and it depended upon the men to make the arrangement permanent by making it profitable.[1]

Before an employer takes this step he values his entire plant, and prescribes the interest it ought to yield him on the average. It is the surplus that may arise above this that he proposes to share with his men. Whether he will do this is a matter of calculation and good sense. He knows that if a workman has no interest in the business beyond his stipulated wages, he requires to be timed and watched; he adopts the easiest processes; he cares nothing to economise material; he has small pride in his work, and little concern for the reputation or fortune of the firm in whose employ he is. He changes his situation whenever he can better himself, leaving his master to supply his place as he may by a strange hand, who loses time in familiarising himself with the arrangements of a workshop new to him, or blunders, or destroys property for the want of special local experience. If the workman has no chance of changing his place for a better, he engages in strikes, imperils the capital and endangers the business of his master. If his strike succeeds, his master dislikes him because of the loss and humiliation he has suffered. If his strike fails, the workman is poorer in means and sourer in spirit. He works only from necessity; he hates his employer with all his heart; he does him all the mischief and makes all the waste he safely can. He gives his ear to alien counsellors, and conspires and waits for the day when he can strike again with more success. If an employer has a taste for this disreputable conflict he can have it. If he does not like it he can prevent it. The newly-made middle-class gentleman is prone to say, "What is my neighbour to me?" It is enough for him that his

[1] In promoting industrial partnership plans, women often show quicker wit than their husbands. I heard one say at a partnership dinner of Messrs. Gimson's men at Leicester, that he had no faith in getting anything that way. His wife said, "Well, don't be a fool. You join and give me your share of profits to buy a new gown with." He made the promise, and found she had enough the first year to buy her three gowns, and then he added, laughingly, he "was sorry he had made the promise."

neighbour does not annoy him or does not want to borrow anything from him, nor create any nuisance upon adjacent premises which may reach to him. Beyond this he thinks very little about his neighbour, and will live beside him for years and never know him, nor want to know him. A co-operative thinker sees in his neighbour a person whom it pays to know. He has a social idea in his mind, which is not merely kindliness, it is worth money.

Charles Frederick Abel became chamber musician to the Queen of George III., because none but he could play upon the viola de gamba (a small violoncello with six strings) with equal perfection. Afterwards came Paganini, who entranced nations by the melody concealed in a solitary cord. It was genius in him to discover and display it. We have not yet explored all the mysteries of cat-gut; yet capitalists would assure us that they have sounded all the compass of the most wonderful of all instruments—man; whereas the employer of labour chiefly knows man as an available animal who trots under the whip, or as a hired machine of reluctant action. The workman has skill and good-will, contriving, saving, and perfecting qualities, which are never enlisted where one man is a mere instrument bound to fidelity only by the tenure of starvation—designing to desert his employer, and the employer intending to dismiss him the moment either can do without the other. Industrial partnership is a policy of buying the skill and will of a man—his genius and his self-respect, which elevate industry into a pursuit of art, and service into companionship. It is a scheme of reciprocity. An industrial partnership is but a superior business arrangement.

But co-operators can make better partnerships for themselves by establishing workshops of their own. To supplicate for them would simply give employers the idea that some charity was sought at their hands. They can be obtained by combination. Trade unions are the available means for this purpose. At the Social Science Congress held in Leeds in 1871 I said in the Economy Section, over which Mr. Newmarch presided, that the working classes should be in that position in which they should neither supplicate nor depend upon the will of their masters. What they had no

right to, no entreaty should obtain for them. What they had a right to, they should be in a position to command. The conception of working a mine the French express by the word *exploiter*. By the phrase *l'exploitation de l'homme par l'homme* is meant that a capitalist uses a man and works a man as he works a mine; he gets all he can out of him. There is no great objection to this so long as the man likes it. Where, however, these partnerships are volunteered, that is a different thing, and too much regard or honour cannot be paid to those whence the offer comes. A speech quite as important as that of Lord Derby's, considering the rank of the gentleman who made it, is of this nature, I mean the speech which the Right Hon. Mr. Brand, Speaker of the House of Commons, addressed to his labourers at Glynde. He said, "We shall never come to a satisfactory settlement of the relations between employer and employed until the employed, according to the amount of labour and capital he has invested in the concern, is interested in the good conduct of that concern."

One merit of this speech was that it was followed by a plan for practically enabling his labourers to become shareholders in the estate at Glynde. The language and the example are alike important. To admit labourers as part-proprietors of the Glynde estate, confers upon them a position of pride and self-respect as valuable as it is new. Such admission, rightly used, would produce more advantages than many agitations, such as are within the means of labourers to conduct. To have it admitted by a gentleman so eminent and influential as the representative of the House of Commons, that labourers had a social right to share in the profits of the estate which they contributed to cultivate, was an admission of more service to the working people than many Acts of Parliament passed in their name, and professedly for their benefit. For an humble villager to be able to say that he was a shareholder in the Glynde estate, however small might be the portion which his prudence and frugality enabled him to acquire, however small might be the profits thus accruing to him, his position was entirely changed. His forefathers were slaves, then serfs, then hired labourers. He becomes in some sort a landowner. He henceforth

stands upon what Lord Cockburn would call a "colourable" equality with the proprietor himself. If he had any cultivated spirit of independence in him, such labourer would have more satisfaction in the idea, than many a tenant farmer is able to find in the position which he holds. It must follow in a few years that the wages of such a man must increase, and by prudence, temper, and good judgment the relation between this body of small proprietors and the chief owner must be pleasant and honourable. That these labourers were wanting in the disposition, or were ill advised by those to whom they would naturally look for counsel, and neglected to act on the unusual offer made by Mr. Brand, detracts in no way from the value of it. Men may be taken to the steps of Paradise, and decline to ascend, yet he is not the less meritorious who gives them the opportunity. A man may not have the sense to ascend—he may not understand his opportunity—he may even distrust it, or think it too insignificant to trouble about, he may have the humility which makes him doubt his own fitness to advance, he may have the diffidence which makes him distrust his own power of going forward, he may even prefer to remain where he is, content that he may advance on another occasion; but he is no longer the same man, he stands higher in his own esteem if he has any self-respect. He has had the chance of better things, and the old feeling of discontent and sense of exclusion and bitterness at his precarious state are changed, and an inspiration of manliness, equality, and undefined satisfaction takes the place of his former feelings. A man may have a great opportunity, and for some preference or infatuation of his own he may go past it; he may regret it, but he is happier than he who never had the chance of bettering himself. So every manufacturer and every land-owner who makes overtures of industrial partnership to his men, raises the character of mastership and proprietorship; sooner or later men will accept the offers, and be grateful for them, and turn them to fortunate account. In the meantime, the whole temper of industry is being changed by these overtures; the mighty doors of conciliation and equality are being opened, through which, one day, all the workmen of England will pass.

In the meantime the mere dream of this invests the order of industry with new interest and hope. This will seem sentimental only to those who know human nature second hand. We all live in ideals. Those who deny the ideal of others live in one of their own—lower or higher. The true artist, solitary and needy though he may be, paints for the truth, the thinker thinks for it, the martyr dies for it, the glory of which only his eye sees. Progress is the mark of humanity. The aspiration even of the lowest is the ideal which carries him forward; and when it fails, manhood perishes.

Co-operation has filled the air with ideas of progress by concert. Men thought the flashes of lightning which play upon the fringe of a coming tempest, were the rainbow arch which denotes a permanent truce between the warring elements, a sign that the storm is passing away.

CHAPTER XXIX

INDUSTRIAL CONSPIRACIES

"My opinion is, we shall never have a satisfactory settlement of the wages question until the labourer receives in some shape or other a share of the profit of the business in which he is engaged. I refer not only to those employed upon farms, but to those engaged in mining, in manufactories, and in trades of all kinds."—*The Right Hon. Mr. Brand's (Speaker of the House of Commons) Speech to Labourers at Glynde*, 1876.

HAD declarations of opinion like that of Lord Hampden, above cited, been acted upon by employers, industrial conspiracies, the "conflicts of capital and labour," would not have existed.

A conspiracy is a secret scheme for attaining certain advantages by coercion. Modern trades unions have been mostly of this kind, the object being, in their case, increase of wages. Co-operation is not a conspiracy, it is a concerted industrial arrangement, open and legitimate, with a view to place moderate competence within the reach of workmen and—keep it there. The end sought by unionists and co-operators is practically the same ; the means of its attainment being different is no intrinsic ground of antagonism between them. Because two companies of excursionists to the same place choose to go, one on foot and the other by railway, is no reason for their hating each other on the road, and not associating at the end of their journey. Nor if any of the walking party become foot-sore, is there any reason why they should not be invited to come into the train at the first station.

The co-operators imagine themselves to have adopted the easier, cheaper, and speedier way of reaching the pleasant territory of competence. They lose no money on the road, they even make what money they expend productive. They

do not annoy masters, nor petition them for increase of wages, nor wait upon them, nor send deputations to them, nor negotiate with them—they make themselves masters. They supply or hire their own capital, they fix their own wages, and, as has been said, divide the whole of the available profits among themselves. Thus they attain increase of income without strikes, or incurring absolute loss of money by paying men to be idle. I am not among those who consider money wasted on strikes. It is an investment in resistance to inequitable payment, which brings return in increased manliness if not in increased wages. At the same time it must be owned there is loss of capital in it. The masters' profits and men's savings spent in strikes, disappear as though they were thrown into the sea. A strike is war, and all war is loss of the material means of the combatants. Therefore the co-operator, whose mind turns mainly upon the hinge of economy, holds that employers, when unfair or aggressive, are to be superseded, not combated. The superseding process has more dignity and costs less. If a gentleman has cause of complaint against a neighbour, an associate, or a stranger, he explains the matter to him, asks for what in reason he has a right to ask, taking care himself neither to be impatient nor give just cause of offence in his manner of putting his case, and if he fail to obtain redress he avoids the person and takes what steps he can to render it impossible that he shall be treated in a similar manner again. This is the co-operative plan of dealing with too exacting middlemen or inconsiderate employers. Nobody quarrels but the bully who has an object in it, or the incapable, who do not know how to put themselves right, except by the primitive expedients of the savage or the washerwoman, by the use of the tomahawk or the tongs.

Just as there would be a good deal of reverence in the world were it not for theologians, so there would be more peace and better understanding between adversaries were it not for conciliators. Conciliators are often disagreeable persons who, having no sympathy for either side, see "faults on both," or, having a predilection for one party, lectures the other upon the good sense of giving way to it. Conciliation is like charity, it is irrelevant where justice is needed—it is offensive where justice is refused.

A combination of workmen to increase their wages is called "a conspiracy," while a similar combination of employers passes under the pleasant description of "a meeting of masters to promote the interests of trade."

Trades unions of the guilds came first. Modern unions grew by a sort of political instinct. It came to be seen that it was not by revolution that the poor could fight their forlorn and frantic way to competence, nor could they in isolation alter the constitution of society. In some faint and perplexing way it was discovered to them that by combination they might acquire redress. Many could resist where the few were crushed; and combination did not require money—only sense. The poorest could unite. It cost nothing to cohere, and cohering was strength, strength was resistance, resistance was money, for thus higher wages came. True, the gain to one set of workmen often proves a serious cost to others, as when masons compel higher wages they put up the house rents of all the poor in the town, and make it more difficult for an artisan to build a house. Yet it was an advantage to the feeble to learn that combination was power, its right use is the second step.

So little attention has been given by historians to projects of the people for protecting their industrial interests, that it is difficult to tell how early trades unions, such as we now know them, began in England. Ebenezer Elliott told me he believed that the ancient industrial guilds arose in efforts of workpeople to forefend themselves and dignify labour, by creating for it rights which might enable it to raise its head under the contempt of gentlemen and insolence of the military spirit. Dr. John Alfred Langford—who has himself helped to raise the character of the industrial class by the persistence with which he, a member of it, has acquired knowledge, and the ability with which he has used it—relates in his "A Century of Birmingham Life" curious particulars of an early conspiracy of needlemen in that active town. The needlemen of Birmingham always knew how to sew ideas together as well as fabrics. If their strike of more than 128 years ago was the first one, strikes came to perfection early. Unionists turn to Co-operation in self-defence, showing a mastery of resources not common to this time. In Dr. Langford's pages we learn

that in *Swinney's Chronicle* of February 13, 1777, the master tailors of Birmingham advertised for 100 hands, who were sure to be able to earn 16s. a week. They were to apply to William Moyston, 130, Moor Street, in that town. As the war with America was then about over, many thought that a nude tribe of Red Indians had arrived in Birmingham and needed clothing at a short notice. Four days later the mystery was explained by a notice to "Journeymen Taylors" signed by George Hanley, telling the public "The statement of the masters was false," and that "the prices were stipulated so that he must be an extraordinary hand to get 12s.," and for that reason they were "all out of work." The masters rejoined by asking for "40 or 50 journeymen taylors to work piece-work, holding out prospects of 16s. to 18s. per week." The applicants "were not to be subject to the House of Call, as none would be employed but such as called at the masters' houses and are free from all combinations." It appears, therefore, that "combinations" must have been common then, and the masters' restrictions were precisely what we hear of to-day. The journeymen in their turn appealed to the public, whose sympathy was with the men. They said they "objected to piece-work on the ground of their late suffering by it." They defended their "House of Call as an ancient custom both in London and all other capital towns," and announced "that they had joined together in order to carry on their trade in all its different branches, and that good workmen and those only who applied at their House of Call at the "Coach and Horses," in Bell Street, would meet with good encouragement." By "hunting the country round" all the masters obtained were "inexperienced lads," whereas the tailors on strike were able to serve gentlemen well. Thus in Birmingham near 130 years ago a co-operative workshop was devised as the sequel of a strike. It is the first instance known. Trades unions in England as this century has known them, were not the device of policy but the offsprings of instinct and courage. There were splendid trades unions in the days of the English guilds. Nor would they have arisen again save that men were inspired with boldness by political teachers, and began to combine to offer some resistance. They little thought of demanding higher wages—they thought it a great

triumph to prevent theirs being lowered. The fable of the bundle of sticks struck them as it did the poor co-operators as a very original story. As one set of workmen after another faggoted themselves together, the humble and familiar symbol of the tied sticks appeared in their trade journals, and was soon carried on their banners. Then combination laws were passed against the struggling unionists. Those who did not get imprisoned or transported like the Dorchester labourers, were told that what they sought was all of no use: supply and demand had been discovered, and in case these failed, the labourer could not be sufficiently grateful that a poor-house had been provided for him, as the workhouse master told the dying pauper who presumed to want to see the clergyman—that "he ought to be glad he had a hell to go to."[1] Still the workman clung to his union, feeling, but not knowing how to explain it, as Mr. Roebuck subsequently did. This is the unionist case as put by that master of statement:—

"The working man, single-handed, as compared with the master, is a weak and impotent being. The master has him in his own hands, can do with him what he likes, give him what wages he pleases; for there are a large number of persons outside wishing to be employed—labour is cheap and plentiful; and the master decides that he will give the men low wages. There are 200 or 2,000 men working together, and they say one to another, 'Let us act as one man.' They bring the whole body of workmen to bear as one man on the master. Let there be equality on both sides, the working man having the benefit of the only capital he possesses, viz., his labour; and the master having the benefit of that which is absolutely necessary to production—his capital."

Now everybody admits the right of the workman to combine; but those who admit the right deny its utility, and contend that the workmen had better leave things to take their course, and wages would rise of themselves. Since, however, employers and merchants who say this are observed never to wait for prices to rise of themselves but combine to help them upwards, the workman came to the conclusion that he had

[1] A story related by Mr. Frederic Harrison.

better combine to quicken wages in their laggard movement towards elevation.

Any one can see that combination is a distant power, only reached by many steps; confidence, organisation, and discipline are some of them. The working people have conspired in many ways, according to their knowledge. The reason why political philanthropists have always made it their chief object to promote the education of the poorest class in the State, was their perceiving that workmen would one day expect the exhortations to frugality and prudence, given them by their "betters," to be followed by their "betters," and insist upon it being followed. When Mr. Malthus and the Political Economists began their protests against the large families of the poor, wise and friendly protests as they were, the day was sure to come when the poor in turn would protest against the large families of the rich, whom the indigent would know had to be provided for at their expense. If the labourer is to be frugal, and live upon his small income without debt, or need of charity in sickness, he will be sure to wonder, one day, why those who admonish him should need mansions, parks, carriages, and footmen. Unless the poor are kept absolutely ignorant and stupid, no man can advise frugality to poverty without those who receive the advice expecting that he who gives it will follow it himself. All monitorial improvement of the lower class must end in enforcing a corresponding improvement in the upper classes. These ebullitions of sense on the part of the working classes are very infrequent in their history. I have met with only two or three instances, long forgotten now and buried in the obscure pamphlets of 1832. Their relevance, however, is not gone, and the vigour of the argument, forcible beyond the defamatory invective on which feeble agitators so commonly rely. When Mr. Joseph Pease, of the firm of Pease & Co., worsted manufacturers at Darlington, one of the Society of Friends, and a strenuous member of the Anti-Slavery Society, was a candidate for the southern division of the county of Durham, he issued an address to the electors, in which he said, "In all measures for the amelioration of our kind in striking off the chains of slavery and mental darkness, in restraining the oppressor, and in turning the attention of a Christian Legislature to Christian

principles, I would be ardent and exertive." Whereupon a little piecer in his factory was sent to him, with this little infantile speech in her hand :—

"Good master, let a little child, a piecer in your factory
From early dawn to dewy eve—relate her simple history.
Before I came to work for you, my heart was full of mirth and glee;
I play'd and laugh'd, and ran about, no kitten was so blythe as me.
But just when I was eight years old, poor mother, press'd with want and woe,
Took me one morning by the hand, and said, 'To factory thou *must* go.'
They thrust me in and shut the door, 'midst rattling wheels and noisy din,
And in the frame gait made me stand, to learn the art of piecen-ing.
I often hurt my little hands, and made my tender fingers bleed,
When piecing threads and stopping flys, and thought 'twas very hard indeed.
The overlooker pass'd me oft, and when he cried, 'An end down there,'
My little heart did tremble so, I almost tumbled down with fear.
When at the weary evening's close I could not keep myself awake,
He sometimes *strapp'd* me till I cry'd as if my little heart would break.
Oh, master! did you know the half that we endure, *to gain you gold*
Your heart might tremble for the day *when that sad tale must all be told.*
Ah! then I thought of days gone by, when, far from spindles, din, and heat,
I deck'd my little giddy brow with buttercups and violets sweet.
From year to year I sigh in vain, for *time* to *play*, and *time* to *read.*
We come *so* soon, and leave *so* late, that nought we know but *mill and bed.*
They tell us you grow very rich, by little piec'ners such as me,
And that you're going to Parliament, to guard our laws and liberty,
They say you *pity* Negro Slaves, and vow, oppressors to restrain,
To break the chains of ignorance, and *Christian Principles* maintain.
Oh! when you're there remember us, whilst at *your* frames we labour still,
And give your best support and aid to Mr. Saddler's Ten Hours Bill.
The poor, we know, must work for bread, but, master, are not *we* too young?
Yet if such little ones *must* work, pray do not work us quite so long!
Your 'Christian Principles' now prove, and hearken to the piec'ners' prayer,
Soon Christ in Judgment shall appear, remember, *you must meet us there.*"[1]

The other instance occurred in 1833, when Mr. H. Warburton had introduced what was known as the Anatomy Bill, called in Yorkshire the "Paupers' Dead Body Bill," which provided subjects out of the poor-house for doctors to cut up. As the wives and families of workmen in those days had no prospect before them but that of ending their days in

[1] The italics are given as I find them.

the poor-house, they did not like this Bill, which they believed was intended to bring them all to the dissecting-room. At the same time, Mr. Wilson Patten, instead of supporting the Ten Hours Bill, which the poor people believed would render pauper subjects scarce, had proposed a commission to inquire into Factory labour, but that subject, they thought, had been inquired into enough, and they thought the Commission a trick intended to delay passing the Bill. It is a custom of Parliament when people are mad and perishing for lack of some long-denied amelioration, to appoint a "Royal Commission" to inquire whether they want it. The young girl piecers, or the "pieceners," as they sometimes called themselves, addressed a letter to Mr. Wilson Patten, M.P. It was shorter than the previous address, somewhat more lyrical, but quite as much to the purpose in its way. It ran thus :—

"Have you no children of your own,
Cold-hearted Wilson Patten ?
We wish you'd send Miss Pattens down
All decked in silk and satin.

Just let them work a month with us,
And 'doff' their nice apparel ;
And 'don' their 'brats' like one of us—
We promise not to quarrel.

We'll curtsey low—say 'Ma'am' and 'Miss,'
And teach them how to 'piece,' Sir ;
They shan't be *strapt* when aught's amiss,
They shan't be treated rough, Sir.

We'll call them up at 'five o'clock,'
When all is dark and dreary ;
No *miller* rude, their tears shall mock,
Nor vex them when they're weary.

We'll guard them home when work is done,
At seven or eight at night, Sir,
We'll cheer them with our harmless fun,
And never show our spite, Sir.

And when they've wrought a month at mill,
If *they* do not petition
For US to have the Ten Hour Bill,
THEN SEND US YOUR 'COMMISSION.'"

In *Frazer's Magazine* at this period attention was called to the evidence of Mr. Gilbert Sharpe, the overseer of Keighley, Yorkshire, who was examined by the Factory Commission. He was asked whether he had any reason to think that any

children lost their lives in consequence of excessive work in the mills. He said he had no doubt of it, and he gave this instance. "Four or five months back, there was a girl of a poor man's that I was called to visit; she was poorly—she had attended a mill, and I was obliged to relieve the father in the course of my office, in consequence of the bad health of the child; by and by she went back to her work again, and one day he came to me with tears in his eyes. I said, 'What is the matter, Thomas?' He said, 'My little girl is dead.' I said, 'When did she die?' He said, 'In the night; and what breaks my heart is this: she went to the mill in the morning; she was not able to do work, and a little boy said he would assist her if she would give him a halfpenny on Saturday; I said I would give him a penny." But at night, when the child went home, perhaps about a quarter of a mile, in going home she fell down several times on the road through exhaustion, till at length she reached her father's door with difficulty.

Verse-writers with more or less skill put these facts into song. Here are two of the stanzas enforcing the argument of contrast of condition:—

"All night with tortured feeling,
He watch'd his speechless child;
While close beside her kneeling,
She knew him not—nor smil'd.
Again the factory's ringing,
Her last perception's tried;
When, from her straw-bed springing,
'Tis time!' she shriek'd and died!

That night a chariot pass'd her
While on the ground she lay;
The daughters of her master
An evening visit pay;
Their tender hearts were sighing,
As negro wrongs were told,
While the white slave was dying,
Who gain'd their father's gold."

This is true of another factory child, who just before died of consumption, induced by protracted factory labour. With the last breath upon her lips, she cried out, "Father, is it time?" and so died.

The true ground of resentment is not that employers should take children into workshops, for many workmen when they

become overseers, and derive a profit on child-labour, do the same thing; it is that any workmen in England should be so base or so indigent as to send children into a workshop, and are not to be restrained save by an Act of Parliament. If unable to protect their children it showed a humiliating weakness, and it was high time that the better-natured sought power by combination to prevent it. This at least is to their credit. These dreary facts of factory life recounted were told in every household of workmen in the land, and no one can understand the fervour and force with which industrial conspiracies were entered into, who does not take them into account. Mr. Lucas Sargant, of Birmingham, has stated that, "though his interest as employer might lead him to deprecate trades unions and strikes, which have often caused him losses, he had declared in print his opinion that mechanics were wise to enter into such unions, and occasionally to have resort to strikes."

A sense of right and sympathy always connected co-operators with the industrial conspirators, allies, or advisers. It was on March 30, 1830, that Mr. Pare delivered his first public lecture in the Mechanics' Institution, Manchester. He appeared as the corresponding secretary of the first Birmingham Co-operative Society. It was Birmingham who first sent co-operation officially to Manchester. The editor of the *United Trades Co-operative Journal* wrote of Mr. Pare as being "A young man who impressed his audience by his earnestness and wide information," but objected to his tone as to trades unions. Mr. Pare did not speak in a directly hostile way of them, but suggested the inability and uselessness of combining to uphold wages. Mr. Pare had caught Mr. Owen's indifferent opinion of everything save the "new system." But at that early period co-operators were intelligent partisans of trades unions. The Manchester *United Trades Co-operative Journal* of May, 1830, justified trades unions by the memorable saying of Sir Robert Peel in the House of Commons: "I wish the people would see their own interests, and take the management of their affairs into their own hands." "Such is the advice," said the editor, which Mr. Peel, the Secretary of State, has given the working classes. It is rare indeed that public men, especially ministers of State,

offer such counsel, and it is still more rare for those to whom the advice is given to act upon it." It is a remarkable thing and a very honourable distinction that Sir Robert Peel should have conceived and given such advice. Trades Unions and Co-operation are two of the matured answers to it.

No advocate can influence others who is devoid of sympathy with them, and is not scrupulous in doing justice to their best qualities. Co-operative advocates have talked to unionists in as heartless a way as political economists, and attempt to change their policy of action by holding it up to ridicule as financially foolish. Education in independence which men pay for themselves, is a lesson those who learn it never forget, and is worth a good deal.

The difference between the trade unionist and the co-operative way of dealing with a strike is capable of historic illustration. In 1860 a famous strike took place in Colne, Lancashire. The weavers were out for fifty weeks and 4,000 looms were caused to be idle. Cogwheel, one of the weavers, put their case thus. He said, "In Colne there are 4,000 looms. In East Lancashire there are 90,000 looms. If the Colne strike had not taken place the prices all over East Lancashire would have been reduced to the Colne standard, and therefore East Lancashire saved money by contributing £20,000 to the Colne strike." Dr. Watts put the co-operative view of the strike not less concisely thus: "If the Colne people, instead of going on strike for fifty weeks, had kept at work and lived on half-wages, as they had to do during the strike, and had saved the other half, and if the East Lancashire people had subscribed £20,000, as they did, towards keeping the Colne people on strike, the result at the end of fifty weeks would have been £54,000 in hand, and at £15 a loom that money would have set to work in perpetuity for the hands themselves 3,600 looms out of the 4,000 in Colne! The selfsame effort which threw them into beggary would have raised them into independence."[1]

The co-operator holds that the right thing to do is to prepare for self-employment before striking. A trades-union strike is a contest of starvation. It is the siege of the fortress of capital with a view to its reduction by famine, in which the

[1] Dr. John Watts, Lecture, 1861.

besiegers are more likely to perish than the besieged. It seems the modest device of war when the belligerents who have the least strength render themselves helpless in order to fight. The Comte de Paris happily compares a strike and lock-out to a Japanese duel, in which each combatant is under obligation to honour to put himself to death with his own hand.

Where trade unions limit the freedom of others in working its union, action is tyranny. Lord Derby has told the case. "If what you are doing is for your own interest and for that of your fellow-workmen, in time those who now stand aloof will join you. In the meantime, 999 men out of 1,000 have no more right to control the single dissentient than the one would have, were it in his power, to control them. There is hardly a despotism since the world began that has not founded itself on the same plea that it would carry into effect more surely than free citizens the recognised will of the majority. To refuse to recognise the freedom of your neighbours is the first step towards losing your own." [1]

The hasty acts and imputations of ignorant workmen have often provoked employers to high-handed injustice. Yet any one conversant with the literature of strikes must be well aware that the tone and language of men has been far more moderate and deferential to masters than that of masters has been fair and considerate to the men. The *United Trades Co-operative Journal* of Manchester relates that in 1830 the dressers and dyers of Manchester and Salford formed a Co-operative Society, the master spinners having a private trades union of their own, had turned out simultaneously all their hands owing to a dispute about wages, and the master dyer had turned all his men out because they wanted an hour for dinner and he would only give them half an hour. The men fearing all their comrades would be turned out by a general conspiracy of their masters, resolved to begin work for themselves; but as all the premises suitable were in possession of masters, they were driven from Ancoats to Pemberton before they could commence operations. The masters being holders of all suitable property, or able to influence others who held it, pursued their hands with malevolence.

[1] Earl Derby, Opening of Trades' Hall, Liverpool, October, 1869.

Hundreds of strikes would have been averted, years of sullenness and bitterness would have been avoided, had employers reconciled themselves to the admission that workmen were so far equals as to be entitled to conference and explanation. Middle-class masters have been repellent. They would not condescend to confer. They would receive no committee, they would admit no delegates to their counting-house. It was co-operators who first taught working people how to respect themselves and to cease entreaty. They said, "Do not discuss with employers, dispense with them." None but co-operators could give this proud counsel.[1] The great Newcastle-on-Tyne strike of 1866 had been avoided, if employers concerned, who were known to have good feeling towards men, had had ordinary condescension.

In Newcastle-on-Tyne the *Daily Chronicle* did more than any other newspaper to prevent loss to employers, by a generous and considerate advocacy of the claims of workmen. Where it could not approve their claims, it conceded them free publicity of their case and the grounds on which they rested it. Thus violence was averted which has occurred in other places where workmen have been denied access to the press and treated with contemptuous exclusion, or subjected to contemptuous criticism which they were not allowed to answer.

Nor have the arguments oft employed by capitalists to restrain union action been well chosen. Workmen were intimidated by being told that they would drive the trade of the country out of it. This consideration did cause many of them to hesitate. In time they came to the conclusion that if they could not get living wages at home, they would be driven out of the country themselves, and therefore, if they did "drive the work out of the country," there might come this advantage to them—that they would know where to find it when they were driven out after it. Indeed, it was obvious that if trade could not be kept in England except by workmen consenting to accept starvation wages, it could not be kept in England at all—for men on low wages would emigrate sooner or later.

[1] Mr. William Nuttall. Speech in the City Hall, at the opening of the Glasgow Wholesale Society, September 19, 1873.

Few can be aware of what has been the experience of living men, or there would be less severity in the judgment of those who labour. One bit of real life is more conclusive than many arguments. The president of the Rochdale Co-operative Society in 1847, Mr. George Adcroft, told me to-day (October 3, 1877) that when he worked in the pit, men got coal without even a shirt on. They worked absolutely naked, and their daughters worked by their side. This was seventy years ago. It was the rule then for the men to be kept at work as long as there were waggons at the pit mouth waiting to be filled. He and others were commonly compelled to work sixteen hours a day; and from week's end to week's end they never washed either hands or face. One Saturday night (he was then a lad of fifteen) he and others had worked till twelve o'clock, still there were waggons at the pit mouth. They at last rebelled—refused to work any later. The banksman went and told the employer, who came and waited till they were drawn up to the mouth and beat them with a stout whip as they came to the surface. Despite the lashes they clambered up the chain cage, got hold of the whip, and tried to kill the master. Negro slavery was not much worse than that. Mr. Adcroft states that a man who had worked the long hours he describes would not earn more than 17s. or 19s. a week, and half of that would be stopped for "tommy," on the truck system. Living unionists who passed through this state of things were not well trained for taking a dispassionate and philosophical view of the relations of capital and labour.

So long as the workman had enough to do to keep himself from the poor-house, he could not be expected to think much about the pride of an order which had nothing to eat. The invention of the spinning jenny superseded the small spinning-rooms by which so many lived, with some control over their humble fortunes. The jenny drove thousands into mills, where they were at the mercy of capital and panics. Manufacturing by machinery put an end to most of the little workshops, and pride in handicraft which a man felt when the credit or discredit of his work was connected with himself. Any reputation he was enabled now to acquire in the mill passed to the credit of the firm who employed him. He

became merely a machine, a little more trouble to manage than those patented, and he sank, as an artificer, into little more consideration than a man in a large prison, who is known by his number instead of his name. He had no longer a character to acquire or to lose. He was only "one of the hands"; his health, his subsistence, or his recreation died out also. The commencement of the trades unions of the modern kind was the first evidence the workman gave of understanding that he must do something for his own protection. That he blundered in the method he adopted—that his efforts were marked by waste, coercion, and retaliation, were small things compared with the great merit that he struggled at all for some elevation. In late years he has had information enough to improve his methods. Yet no unionist leaders have arisen until the time of Thomas Burt, M.P., who have comprehended, in the same degree as he, the new possibilities of the day. Mechanics' institutions were established by Dr. Birkbeck, Lord Brougham, Francis Place, and others, which languished for years. The class-rooms were more or less tenantless, the teachers had few pupils. Had trades unionists understood what knowledge would do for their children, had they taken note of the inferiority of their sons compared with the educated sons of middle-class masters under whom they worked, they would have crowded the mechanics' institutions with their own sons. The higher manners, the preciser speech, the greater capacity, the more disciplined mind, the tone of intellectual authority shown by the sons of their employers, should have taught them once and for ever that education was the only equality in their power, and they should have insisted that the sons of every member of the union should be sent to the mechanics' institution. The leaders of the people who first devised mechanics' institutions expected that this would be done. The enemies of the people who disliked "institutes," and distrusted them, and feared them, thought so too. Church dignitaries, Conservative politicians, alarmed employers, and country squires united to condemn the dangerous innovation of knowledge which would make the people discontented with "the position to which it had pleased God to call them." All those fears were as foolish as they were wicked. The workmen had, unhappily, not sufficient

sense of their own interests, and needed no restraining from using the means of power placed at their disposal. They were without the intelligence even to see their opportunity.

The great trade guilds of London have mainly sunk into private dining societies.[1] They do not represent the great traditions of industrial pride. The modern masters of guilds are without even the capacity to feel the inspiration which made their forefathers the leaders of art in industry. To-day, indeed, we hear of the Turners' Company of London, awakening from their long, ignoble sleep, offering prizes to young handicraftsmen for skill at the lathe; and the Baroness Burdett-Coutts, distinguished for discerning generosity, has given the largest sum to be expended in this way. This is what trades unions ought to have done long years ago, they should have given prizes to the best workmen in each trade. They could have had the money for asking. The first persons in the State would have done them the honour of distributing their prizes. The character of English workmen would have stood the highest in the world in skill and in the self-respecting dignity of labour. No man should be admitted into a trade union unless he is a good workman, or willing to be made one, and his being allowed to remain a member should be a guarantee to the public that he has skill which can be trusted. Now, a man being a unionist is small guarantee to any one that he will not scamp his work or do the least for the most he can get. Some of the first workmen of the day, and men of character and good faith in work, are members of trades unions, but good skill and good faith are nowhere made the conditions of membership. A trades union council are not leaders of art in industry; they are, with a few exceptions, mere connoisseurs in strikes. All a union does is to strike against low wages; they never strike against doing bad work. It will be a great thing for the reputation of industry in England when they do this. Now they cover themselves with the excuse that their employers want bad and cheap things made. There is no moral difference in doing bad work and picking the purchaser's pocket. A bungler is but a thief

[1] See "City Companies," by Walter Henry James, M.P. (since Lord Northbourne).

with a circumbendibus in his method. Trades unions ought to resent the demand that their members should do bad work, as an affront upon their character as workmen. A few well-devised strikes on this principle would raise wages as no union has ever done yet, and, what is not less important, raise the whole character of industry in England in a few years. This is one form of the organisation of labour wanted.

It is fair to own that trades unionists recognise the importance of their efficiency as workmen. Several Congresses of trades have passed resolutions applauding the attainment of technical knowledge by workmen. The Society of Arts at the Adelphi, London, which does so much for the advancement of popular knowledge, issues yearly a programme of technological examinations, in which mechanics of leading trades and men engaged in agriculture are offered an opportunity of proving their practical knowledge of the nature of their employment. When they have done so certificates of three degrees of proficiency are awarded them, various prizes in money, and even scholarships. Mr. George Howell for years transmitted the necessary documents to different trades to induce workmen to enter into these competitions. This, however, is only approval of knowledge, not insistence upon it. There is more original artistic thought and pride among the artisan class than they are credited with. The Matsys and Cellinis are not extinct. The famous blacksmiths and gold workers have merely had their genius turned in other directions by science. The old artists who worked for fame in their obscure chambers are succeeded by men who expend genius and devotion in devising wondrous machinery. They are Pygmalions of invention who impart to inanimate metal the miraculous action of living intelligence. They think in poverty—they die neglected, and their splendid ingenuity enriches the nation. The acclaim of their genius never reaches the dull, cold ear of death. In later generations the tardy monumental bust is erected over their forgotten graves. The Patent Office is the record of their fine patience and unrequited skill. Mr. George Wallis has discerningly pointed out that the originality of the artisan class is expressed in machinery in these days. Living unnoted men see hidden

things in mechanics which would have made Archimedes famous.

Some people are manifestly born before their time; some are born after—a very long while after—and in any well-regulated system ought to be put back again. There are others apparently born for no time in particular; they are neither offensive nor useful, but chiefly in the way of other people; while there are others who belong to the age and know it, who comprehend very well the opportunities of the hour, who employ them and mean to put them to account. The alliance between co-operators and trade unionists has been of long standing. On the 21st of April, 1834, Mr. Owen headed the great procession to Lord Melbourne to ask the release of the Dorchester labourers. The unionists assembled in Copenhagen Fields. Lord Melbourne agreed to receive a limited deputation of leaders at Downing Street. On the list of names handed in to him Mr. Owen's name was not included, it being probably thought that Mr. Owen being known to Lord Melbourne would be admitted. His lordship, preferring to see the men alone, refused to see any one not on the list he had assented to. Thus the interview took place without the assistance of their most important advocate.

During the early period of the co-operative movement the Socialists and Unionists might be heard from the same platform advocating their respective principles.[1] At Salford the society opened a subscription to support a strike.[2] In London Mr. Owen was elected the Grand Master of a lodge, and he permitted the trade societies to use his lecture hall.[3] The *Crisis* added to its title that of *National Co-operative Trades Union and Equitable Exchange Gazette.* Mr. Owen specially charged himself to effect the release of the Dorchester convicts, but the demonstration which took place on the occasion is said to have exercised an unfortunate influence by increasing the severity of the Government.[4] But that was not Mr. Owen's fault. It rested with those who devised a demonstration which could only increase the alarm which led to the severity the procession

[1] *Crisis*, vol. iii. p. 58.
[2] Ibid., p. 191.
[3] *New Moral World*, vol. i. p. 403.
[4] *Crisis*, vol. iii. p. 253. See Mr. Booth's "Life of R. Owen."

ought to stop. Mr. Owen must have depended on others influence than that of the streets to effect the release of the men.

Trades unions are simply fighting powers on behalf of labour, just as employers' unions are fighting powers on behalf of capital. Masters' unions do not concern themselves with the improvement of manufactures, with excellence of material, or equitable charges to the public. So far as their action appears they consult only the preservation of profits. On the other hand, workmen's unions, as such, mainly charge themselves with the protection or increase of wages. They can issue advice to workmen to refuse, as far as possible, to work except for employers where a partnership of industry exists. It is quite as legitimate for them to strike against employers who refuse this, as to strike against those who refuse increase of wages. Indeed, strikes for partnerships would be fairer than strikes for wages, because in partnerships the profits must be earned before they can be had; whereas in strikes for wages the employer is simply plundered if he is forced to yield where he cannot really afford it, just as the public are plundered when unions of capitalists, or merchants, combine to raise at will the price of commodities which the public must have.

Even at Co-operative Congresses now, we hear from leaders who are making profits in joint-stock companies, vigorous arguments against conceding to workmen a share of profits. They say, just as competitive employers have always said, capital takes all the risks and the workman has his share of the profits in his wages. Asking for what they are pleased to denominate a "bonus" on labour, they treat the demand as a gift, and if it is granted they describe it as proceeding from the "benevolence" of the employer. It is time this chatter of charity on the part of capitalists was ended. A co-operative store or a co-operative workshop, where the profits belong to the producers, is a mutual arrangement. But competition is not an arrangement; it is war. The interests of capital and labour are in conflict; and the demands for participation in profits after capital, management, and expenses have been paid, is no hostile act. Capital as a rule gives the least it can, and labour as a rule exacts the most

it can. In Co-operation mutual arrangement renders the equitable divisions of profit a right, and "bonus" and "benevolence" pernicious and offensive terms.

When at the Amsterdam Exhibition some years ago I went one day, at the invitation of Baron Mackay (since Lord Reay), to see the great works of the new canal out in the Zuyder Zee. Far away on the sands 'mid the North Sea I found what I took to be a Dutch chapel. Its pretty overhanging roofs and quaint desks and seats within, all out there, surprised me. On asking what it was, I was told it was the school-house for the education of the children of the Dutch workmen, employed in cutting and building the mighty canal through plains of sand lying out in the North Sea. "Why do you erect a school-house out here?" I inquired of the chief contractor, who was a Scot. "You do nothing of the kind in your own country. Contractors do nothing of the kind in England." "Oh," was the reply, "it is a convenience for the workmen's families." "Yes, I understand all that," I answered, "but what sets you upon consulting their convenience in Holland when you never think of it elsewhere?" "Well, the truth is," he at last admitted, "that the Dutch workmen having good secular schools in every town where their children can be educated, and knowing the advantages of it, having profited themselves when young by it, will not work for any one who does not provide schools where their families can be trained." This shows what intelligent workmen can do who have the sense to understand their own interests, and this is what English workmen might do with respect to education and participation of profits, if they had as much wit and determination as the drowsy, dreaming, much-smoking, but clear-minded, resolute Dutch.

Adjoining the school-house was a large co-operative store, exactly on the plan of the one first devised by Robert Owen at Lanark. It consisted of a large wood building containing large stores of provisions, lodged there by the contractors and put in charge of a storekeeper, who sold them at cost price—less his wages as salesman. This was a further economy for the men; it made their wages go farther, and was an additional source of contentment to them, costing the employers nothing save forethought and good feeling. This was the

only co-operative store I ever found on the ocean ; it lay in mid-seas.

Though Co-operation is an English movement, its history takes us a good deal over the world—for as we have said elsewhere—Co-operative devices of industry have appeared in other countries during two centuries past. Groups of men acting together for their own advantage are historic features of many lands ; and countless undertakings, not bearing the co-operative name, illustrate the inspiration of the spirit and power of concert.

"The Conflicts of Labour and Capital—a History and Review of Trades Unions," by George Howell, may be mentioned as the ablest book yet produced by an English Trade Unionist leader, as the work of Nadaud is the best produced by a French workman. In point of weight of authority and exhaustive treatment Mr. W. T. Thornton's volume on "Labour" stands next to the writings of Mr. J. S. Mill. The philosophy and practice of Unionism and Co-operation are dealt with by Mr. Thornton with a completeness and impartiality not elsewhere to be found.

CHAPTER XXX

CO-OPERATIVE FAILURES

"If thou wishest to be wise,
Keep these lines before thine eyes ;
If thou speakest—how beware !
Of whom, to whom, and when and where."

BYRON.

WHERE the principle of Industrial Partnership is adopted by workmen it is sometimes superseded rather than abandoned. Outsiders come in as shareholders, and not caring for Co-operation, they seize the society as soon as they are able, outvote the co-operative members, and convert it into a joint-stock business, which they believe to be more immediately profitable to them. This was the way the Mitchell Hey Society at Rochdale fell. Though these instances are but perversions, the business is still conducted by working men, which implies that a larger number of working men are acquiring the skill of masters. This is a progress after its kind, though wanting in the principle of equity and equality, which Co-operation aims to introduce among workmen. There have been no co-operative failures, save from errors into which commercial men of greater experience occasionally fall. Dr. John Watts has given an account of the failure of the Queenwood community. As he was one of those concerned in it, his evidence has weight. He says "the failure of the Hampshire community was attributable, amongst other causes, firstly, to the extravagant price paid for very poor land ; secondly, to the large amount of capital sunk in buildings which were not profitably occupied ; and, thirdly, to the attempt to convert skilled artisans, used to good wages, into

agriculturists upon bad land; and to satisfy them with agricultural labourers' fare, and no money wages."[1]

The tone of the press is greatly changed toward the failures of working men in their manufacturing enterprises. In days of the limited and dear press, newspapers mostly represented the interests of masters; when a working-class enterprise failed the matter was mentioned with contemptuous derision, and was treated as a warning to men not to exhibit the presumption that they could be masters. When a failure occurs to working men now, it is thought to be a misfortune that they are not able to better their condition by industrial enterprise. If their failure has arisen through an unforeseen rise in prices, which made their contracts unprofitable, or through the bankruptcy of customers owing them money whose solvency they had no reason to doubt when they took their orders,[2] or if the losses of the men have arisen from unexpected decay of trade, the same allowance is made now in the judgment of their failure as is made in the case of other manufacturers who conduct business on competitive principles.

When the Ouseburn Engine Works failed the *Eastern Daily Press* remarked that "Mr. Holyoake would have to chronicle that in his History," which he certainly intended to do; but in justice to the *Eastern Press* I record that that failure was judged in that journal upon its merits. It was not, as formerly would have been the case, set down as a failure of the co-operative principle, but regarded as arising from errors in business management, and the outside causes of the loss were fairly taken into account. The main source of failure was a series of contracts made by an agent (£30,000 under their values), which no manager who understood his business would have permitted.

The co-operators are the most open creatures who ever entered into business. So far from concealing a failure, they proclaim it too loudly, their desire being that all may take note what to avoid in the future. When the Ouseburn Engine Works had lost the £30,000 through Dr. Rutherford making suspicious contracts, the fact was publicly pro-

[1] "Co-operative Societies," Dr. J. Watts.

[2] Both these causes operated greatly in producing the failure of the Ouseburn Engine Works at Newcastle-on-Tyne.

claimed. He was not dismissed, nor did he resign, so that the co-operators were the pity of all the Tyneside for remaining under the management which had brought the great disaster upon them. Incapacity is of the nature of a crime when it meddles with the fortune of a struggling cause, or does not take itself away when its incompetence is plainly perilous. The Ouseburn workmen behaved admirably. When they were informed that false contracts had been taken, involving the enormous loss cited, it was open to them to avenge themselves by executing the work badly; but they honestly resolved to execute it to the best of their ability notwithstanding, and they did so; and no engine works on the Tyneside ever won higher credit for honest and perfect workmanship. They got through their great and unjustifiable losses. It was by failure of subsequent creditors that the concern fell into liquidation.

People who hear now and then of the failure of co-operative engine works or mines imagine they forbode the end of that system and do not take into account that other persons who are not workmen, and who are experienced in business, fail also. At the time of the Ouseburn difficulty the *Daily Chronicle*, at Newcastle-on-Tyne, published a list of the failures which had occurred in Cleveland in the course of twelve months, with the amount of the liability in five cases. The following is the list :—

Sivert Hjerlid, ironfounder, Middlesbrough.
North Yorkshire Iron Co., Limited.
W. A. Stevenson, iron merchant.
Eston Grange Iron Co., Eston.
Thomas Richardson & Sons.
Nicholas Raine, South Hylton Ironworks.
R. Jaques, Richmond Ironworks, Stockton.
J. H. Garbutt, coalowner, Darlington.
E. Watteau, bolt and nut manufacturer, Middlesbrough.
Erimus Iron Company, Middlesbrough.
F. Ireland, iron merchant, Middlesbrough.
Middlesbrough Cut Nail Works.
Stockton Rail Mill Co., Stockton.
The Britannia Iron Company, Middlesbrough.
Ross, Willis & Co., Middlesbrough.
Thos. Vaughan & Co., Middlesbrough.
J. B. Walker, shipowner, Middlesbrough.
Swan, Coates & Co., Middlesbrough.
Raylton, Dixon & Co., shipbuilders, Middlesbrough.
Thos. Charlton & Co., coal and ironstone mine owners, Middlesbrough.
South Cleveland Iron Co., Limited.
The Lackenby Iron Co., Middlesbrough.

R. H. Charlton, Stranton Ironworks, Hartlepool.
Messrs. Thomas & Co., ironfounders, Middlesbrough.
J. W. Thomas, Acklam Refinery.
West Hartlepool Iron Co., Limited.

	Liabilities.
Thos. Vaughan & Co.	£1,200,000
Swan, Coates & Co.	280,000
Lackenby Iron Co.	200,000
R. Dixon & Co.	175,000
Messrs. Charlton	270,000
	£2,125,000

Only one of these firms was expected to pay more than 5s. in the pound.

Some years ago the Wholesale Society of Glasgow lost £10,000 by an investment made without their formal authority. There was, however, no doubt that the investment, though irregular, was made in good faith, and had it turned out fortunate it had been applauded. The Society remembered this, and quietly provided for the loss, and took precautions that the same thing should not occur again. Not long ago the Halifax Society lost £60,000 by injudicious investment in Foreign Securities. The members behaved like men of business. They knew that had the large profits they calculated upon accrued, they would have thought their directors "smart fellows." They did not break up their society as a few wild members, stimulated by shopkeepers, proposed ; and as their predecessors did a generation earlier, on the loss of less then 160th part of that sum. They simply arranged to repair the loss from future profits, and made a note to invest more prudently in future. Working men who have acquired this kind of good sense will very rarely stumble into failure.

If a series of failures disproved a principle, what must be said of the failures of competition, where twenty men fail for one who succeeds ? Had any one invented competition it would have been hooted out of the world long ago as an infernal contrivance of spite and greed. To use a phrase made picturesque by Mr. Henley in the House of Commons, competition is an "ugly rush"—an ugly rush after bones, which everybody is equally ambitious to pick. As to failure, what are the failures of banking ? Let those hideous, criminal, calamitous failures be catalogued, and banking must be pro-

nounced unsound in principle. Co-operation, in its most unfortunate days, will bear comparison with banking.

Messrs. Fox, Head & Co., of Middlesbrough, proposed, with fair intentions, a partnership of industry with their men; but stipulated that the men should give up their trades unions and sign a contract to that effect. The company on their part agreed to withdraw from the masters' union. They were at liberty to please themselves in this matter. But the condition they exacted from the men was a degrading condition. What was it to them to what purposes the men put their earnings so long as they fulfilled their contract with them? The proceeding of this company was an abuse of industrial partnership, and calculated to bring it into disrepute. It had been far better had they never touched the question.

The Messrs. Briggs, of the Whitwood Collieries, brought their scheme to an end in a similar spirit. Their partnership with their men brought them great gain while it lasted. Some years several thousands of pounds were divided among their workmen, being merely the half-profits made by the increased exertion and care of the men, apart from the exceptional profits of the years when the price of coal rose greatly. But the total made in the way of profit while the partnership lasted has never been declared.[1] The Messrs. Briggs appear to have taken advantage of their men attending a certain trades union meeting, which they had forbidden them to attend, to exclude them from the partnership, and even to withhold from some the money they had earned in the partnership. This dictation to their men in matters outside their duties to the company, was a disastrous lesson to set the men. It has been inferred that the company found strikes less expensive than fulfilling an honourable partnership. They may have terminated it because it was more troublesome to them than their interest in the welfare of their men induced them to take. They have given no satisfactory explanation of the facts, financial or otherwise, involved in the case. The

[1] The most remarkable statement is that given by the Comte de Paris, who says: "In 1867 Messrs. Briggs realised a net profit of £20,417 after paying all outlays and allowing for wear and tear. A portion only of this sum was divided. £8,000 was laid by in order to secure a bonus to the men in the bad years that might come. In Mr. Briggs' opinion the old system would not have yielded equal profits under similar circumstances" ("Trades Unions of England," by Comte de Paris, p. 219).

failure, so far as it is known, has not been on the part of the men, but on the part of their employers.

When the Messrs. Briggs first proposed to adopt some plan of co-operative partnership in their collieries, I received from them several letters explanatory of their objects, and of the difficulties which presented themselves. With a view to promote their wise intention, to diminish obstacles which the prejudices of trades unionists might entertain towards the project, and to support the Messrs. Briggs in their views, to justify them in the eyes of other employers, and to increase their public credit for taking a lead in so useful and honourable a design, I solicited opinions of the project from Mr. John Stuart Mill, Professor Fawcett, Louis Blanc, and others, to whom I explained the possible industrial advantages of it. The letters I received were published, and the words of honour spoken of these employers by such friends of equitable industry were repeated in their praise. In any way I could I was glad to strengthen their hands; but the letters I received at that time from the Messrs. Briggs did not make me very sanguine that they would carry their plan through, or persevere in it from conviction of its public advantage. They manifestly inherited a distrust of workmen. They imputed venality and self-interest to leading unionists who advised their men. They thought too much of disparaging and destroying trade unions. They spoke too much of the proposed participation of profits as a "bonus" to the men, as though it were a largess or gracious gift to the workmen arising from their employers' goodness of disposition and depending for its continuance upon the good behaviour of their hands. Their plan was complex, there were too many conditions, and even the conditions were conditional. It would, however, be unfair to make much of these peculiarities. The project was new in their business. They could not foresee to what administrative inconvenience it might lead. Conflicting claims, interest, and prejudices are always called into play when any new plan is adopted among the working class more or less uninformed, or unfamiliar with it. These were real difficulties which might well render the best-disposed employers uncertain as to the measures to which they would commit themselves. Besides, the Messrs. Briggs were not themselves co-operators. The principle and definite

line of thought which Co-operation implies must have been strange to them. It therefore remains a credit to them that they entertained the idea of establishing co-operative relations in their works, and actually attempted it. It would be scant encouragement to other employers to try the same thing if those who do try it, and do not succeed in carrying it forward, or turn back discouraged, were to be treated with less consideration than those who never made any attempt of the kind. What Mr. J. S. Mill thought of their attempt he stated very strongly in his letter to me from Saint Veran, Avignon (Nov. 21, 1864). "The Messrs. Briggs have done themselves great honour in being the originators in England of one of the two modes in Co-operation which are probably destined to divide the field of employment between them. The importance of what they are doing is the greater, as its success would make it almost impossible hereafter for any recreant co-operative societies to go back to the old plan of paying only fixed wages when even private capitalists give it up." Unfortunately they have returned to fixed wages and given comfort thereby to others besides "recreant co-operative societies."

The failures of co-operative stores have been infrequent. Their success as a rule is so overwhelming that any failures have been due to common neglect of well-defined precautions which experience has established. Mr. J. C. Farn has relevantly pointed out that "the art of organisation was in its infancy thirty years ago; now (1878), if it is incomplete in practice, it arises from neglect, and not for want of models. Popular intolerance in days gone by was a hundred times more powerful than it is now. Without tolerance, societies cannot permanently succeed. The co-operative ship of thirty years since had to sail over the sea of difficulty without chart or compass. Now the rocks are known and marked dangerous, none but unskilful or neglectful pilots need allow the ship to strike upon them. Finally, with more members, more money, more experience, more support, more confidence, more tolerance, and sounder views, there is no reason to believe that the disasters of former times will be repeated."

One source of distrust to which co-operative enterprises are subject arises in the enthusiasm in which they are often commenced. The projectors of a new company, conscious of the

purity of their own intentions, behave just as knaves do, when they set floating a fraudulent scheme. They deprecate all inquiry into it, and regard any one who points out objections or difficulties to be encountered, as a disagreeable person who wants to damp the enthusiasm of others, and destroy the prospects of a company which he does not intend to help. The enthusiastic promoters are so strong in the honesty of their intentions, that they imagine their wisdom to be as obvious as their integrity, and regard doubts of their success as imputations upon themselves; they do not perceive that just objects, and noble aims, though necessary to the success of an unusual enterprise, do not necessarily make it successful. There must be fair business prospects and fair business sense in addition, in order that great interest may be taken in any project. There must be confidence in the capacity as well as the honour of those who promote it; and confidence depends upon the knowledge of the persons and purposes of those with whom it is proposed to work; and it is wisdom in the promoters of any new company to furnish this information, without waiting to be asked for it. It is good policy to solicit all the objections that can be made at the outset of a concern, so that they may not come when it is too late to profit by them. The objector is a very valuable person, if enthusiasts knew how to profit by him. Enthusiasm, desire of personal distinction, or hope of profit, is apt to blind the understanding, and the wise objector (if he can be found) is the occulist who opens the eyes of the company, and enables the members to see what the facts of the case really are. It matters not how strong or peculiar the points urged in opposition may be, the general soundness of a sound scheme can always be shown, and shown to far greater advantage when the objector has given his evidence against it in open court, than it could before he was heard. If the soundness of the project cannot, then, be made clear, it is better for all concerned that the difficulty should be apparent. Objections may be disallowed, or overruled, but they should be heard, and considered as far as their relevance seems to warrant. When this is done, the shareholders find themselves well advised and candidly informed, and they go into the undertaking with their eyes open; and if it does not answer they have nobody to reproach but themselves. They feel none of

the bitterness of men who have been misled by others, and they even feel respect for those who afforded them so fair an opportunity of knowing the truth ; and the failure involves no loss of self-respect to any one, since a fair measure of prudence had marked the proceedings. But if critics, suggestors, or objectors, who do the society the service of volunteering advice upon its affairs, are put down as offensive or suspicious persons, the interest of members is foolishly jeopardised. If the promoters of a doubtful or dishonest company succeed in obtaining the money of the shareholders, everybody can see that it is as criminal a thing as though that money had been taken by an act of burglary, and is more irritating to those who lose by it, because insidious professions have made them parties to their own loss. The wrong done by honest, earnest projectors of schemes is not less serious in its results because unintended. But their honest intentions do not absolve them from criminality, if they have incurred risks without the fullest inquiry possible into them, and without communicating the results of that inquiry to all whom they invited to share those risks with them. Of course there are projects continually started where the profits depend upon celerity and secrecy of action. In these cases it is obvious that to solicit objections from outsiders would betray the purpose. In such concerns only a few persons are ever engaged, and they know perfectly what they are doing, and do not go about complaining if their money is lost. It is public companies where shareholders are sought among persons of large and small means alike, and who invest money and trust in the honour and capacity of the directors of the company, that a scrupulous and complete information should be furnished, as a matter of fair precaution and good faith. It should be a matter of pride in co-operators that no failure should take place among them. Their aim should be to acquire the reputation not only for honesty, but for soundness of judgment, and sureness of procedure. In the days of Harry Clasper and Robert Chambers it was known that when Newcastle oarsmen rowed a match upon any river, they would win if they could—they were never to be bought. They contested for the honour of the Tyneside ; and co-operators should always be known as contesting for the honour of Co-operation.

A frequent source of failure arises from a cause which involves no imputation upon the honesty of those concerned—that is, "commencing a project with too little capital." Though this implies merely want of judgment, the effect of failure is the same upon the outside public, who never trouble to notice why a thing fails. The failure itself is enough for them, and the cause with which it is connected is damaged in their eyes. "Insufficiency of capital" is so vague a cause, and is so often used as an excuse for graver errors, that nobody accepts it for much. It depends upon whether the scale of expenditure had been prudent and cautious from the beginning, whether the capital is really too small. Deficiency may be produced by imprudent and disproportionate expenditure. Deficiency of capital is of course a distinct and determinable cause of failure, and should be guarded against like any other. It often arises through enthusiasm which impels premature action. A meeting is called to consider whether a new scheme can be undertaken. Good and approving plaudits will soon be heard, if the proposal be popular. Some generous person is inspired by the hearty applause to make a liberal offer of support. He probably mistakes the enthusiasm for intelligent, well-considered purpose. Professor Tyndall has proved that heat is a mode of motion. Prof. Crooks has proved that light is a source of movement, and delicate machines have been contrived for estimating these forces. But no one has invented a machine which will denote the quality of applause; some men applaud because they are impulsive, some because they approve of the proposal, some because they intend to help it—when it succeeds; but the greater part applaud because they think somebody else is going to aid it; and it frequently comes to pass that experiments are commenced under the contagion of chequeless enthusiasm, which only considerable capital can carry out. There are always sanguine and dangerous people, who think a right thing will get support if it is once begun. But wise promoters should never permit action to be taken till reasonable means of carrying it out are secured.

A man who has had experience in popular movements becomes a connoisseur in enthusiasm, and is disposed to analyse it before he counts upon it as an element of action. When Mr. Forster was proposing his 25th clause to the Education

Act in the House of Commons he stretched out his arm before the Opposition, and informed them he had Puritan blood in his veins. I begged a member who happened to be in the Speaker's gallery at the time to go down and ask Mr. Forster to put a drop of that blood into his Bill. The Nonconformists said "the blood would do no good, it was of a degenerate quality." I asked Professor Huxley whether he could analyse one of the globules that we might know whether the quality was pure. This is what has to be done with popular enthusiasm, its blood must be tested before it can be trusted. If this were oftener done failures of co-operative enterprise, though small in number now, would be fewer still.

A considerable number of manufacturing and productive societies have been formed which have included the principle of partnership with labour, which have scarcely gone beyond the publication of rules. In some instances capital has not been subscribed sufficient to enable the undertaking to be commenced, or not sufficient to carry on business long enough for success. In other cases the accession of new shareholders who joined for profit mainly, not caring about improving the general relations of labour to capital, have, when profits were low, voted against sharing them with workmen. Sometimes they have done this because the profits were great, and they became covetous of obtaining all for themselves. Such shareholders being shrewd, and not caring for the advancement of workmen, have calculated that the cost of strikes was less than the loss, through conceding a share of profit to the men, have deliberately elected to take the risk of strikes, and rescinded the rule of participation. In a new business, depending for prosperity upon sales in the market, greater capital often becomes necessary than was at first calculated upon ; and being exigent it becomes necessary to take from any subscribers of shares who may offer, without inquiry as to whether they are co-operators or not. In the early days of Co-operation every society instituted a propagandist department, for winning co-operators to join them, or of educating them afterwards. Where this is not done, and shareholders are received without precaution, principle is left at the mercy of new members, and often drifts and disappears. In this way principle was cancelled very early in the Rochdale Co-operative Manufacturing

Society of Mitchell Hey. In this way it was attempted to be destroyed in the Hebden Bridge Fustian Co-operative Society, but happily resisted successfully by the loyalty of a sufficient number of the members. The "Fustian" had not got into their brains.

It is no matter of discouragement that even co-operators turn back after proceeding for awhile along the new path. Many make their way badly along an unaccustomed road, and naturally return again to the old trodden path with which they are familiar. All men must live somehow, and industrial or commercial fighting is the only general way in which men have been able to sustain themselves. Until adventurous pioneers show how the needs of life can be better commanded, the timid, or rapacious, impatient, or distrustful will be uncertain adherents.

CHAPTER XXXI

AMERICAN SOCIETIES

As wine and oil are imported to us from abroad, so must ripe understanding and many civil virtues be imported into our minds from foreign writings: we shall else miscarry still, and come short in the attempts of any great enterprise.—MILTON'S *Hist. of Brit.*, Book iii.

THE English students of co-operative science found hospitality for their ideas in America when they found none in England. No English journal of the importance and character of the *New York Tribune*, founded by Horace Greeley, ever accorded the attention to it, the hearing to it, or the vindication of it which he accorded there. He himself promoted Co-operation and wrote upon it with that practical clearness by which he was distinguished. As a journalist he aided whoever assisted by thought and art the improvement of social life. From sentiments of public admiration, not less than from the regard inspired by his personal friendship, I inscribed to him my "History of Co-operation in Halifax." While schemes of social life have originated with philosophers and theorists, Co-operation has been generated by the pressure of competition in over-populated cities.

As to moral scepticism in America, there is no more of it than there is in England, while there are certainly more people in America than in England who sacrifice time, money, and, what is more, personal repute, to try and carry out social schemes of life which can never benefit themselves.

America owes its chief co-operative inspiration to English Socialist emigrants. Its communities have been mainly originated by European world-makers. The late Mr. Bellamy Hoare, of New York, possessed the most authentic informa-

tion as to the earliest efforts to establish Co-operation there. But the narratives he is said to have left have not yet been obtained.

A former member of the Socialist Branch 16, Hall of Science, London, Mr. B. J. Timms, was concerned in the affairs of the Sylvania Phalanx and the Co-operative Bakery of the City of New York, which are deemed the original societies of this kind there. The date of their operations cannot be at present determined, as Mr. Timms so little foresaw that any persons might one day be curious about them, that he sold as waste-paper the printed and manuscript documents relating to them. These projects were succeeded by what was known as the organisation of Morrisania, devised to purchase land for a village. The few actual Socialists in the society could not induce the majority to unite further than in buying the land collectively ; so that the only co-operative feature in the scheme was the joint effort to obtain land without loss by the competition of each making a separate purchase, and every one searching the original title. Mr. Timms reports that subsequently they attempted to apply the principle of Co-operation to colonise public lands, but after spending 5,000 dollars of other people's money, that scheme failed. These facts show how in America (as used to be the case in England) the one story of Co-operation is that it is always failing. Still the efforts go on, as though there were some industrial destiny in Co-operation. So long as many who have failed live, very few workers around them have the courage to approach the question ; but no sooner do those who have failed die, or the memory of their disaster fades, than fresh pioneers resume the old work—and succeed. In other cases the fresh adventurers are fortunate enough to meet with some old and brave campaigners who, though they lost their money, never lost their faith, and who never cease to proclaim that others may win though they were beaten. In America many were willing to see it run, but few ran with it. Co-operative correspondence from other countries shows that the co-operator abroad is much like the Irishman—a very different person from what he is at home. In Ireland he is sluggish and despondent ; in America he is active and enterprising. In like manner the discouraged co-operator at home stoutly predicts and stoutly promotes co-operative success

abroad, and counts those ignorant who do not understand the principle, and those of an inferior order of mind who do not believe in it.

The Morrisania, the First Co-operative Village, as it was called, is now a large town. Dr. Hollick, writing in New York, says: "Co-operative affairs, as far as I can see, went on this plan: some man of money was elected treasurer. No money was paid *to* him, and as long as he honoured all drafts made *on* him the thing prospered; but when he discontinued this obliging arrangement the thing 'bust up.' Horace Greeley was treasurer to two or three schemes, and his official duty consisted in paying the expenses."

One of the few co-operative societies of America, English in its vicissitudes, un-English in its mode of working, is one at New Bedford, Fall River. Provisions being high, and other things, as in England, being costly, a few persons who had been connected with co-operative societies in this country, bethought themselves of setting up one there. Certain dressers clubbed their money, bought goods at wholesale prices, and at first divided them at their private houses. Their business soon grew, and they had to open a store. Then the grocers of Fall River—storedealers, as they are called out there—did as we have found them do in England, went in a body to the wholesale traders, telling them that if they supplied the co-operators they, the storedealers, would no longer buy of them. The dressers were consequently rejected as customers, and they went to Providence, a town fourteen miles away, and tried to buy there. The storekeepers at Fall River attempted to terrify the wholesale traders of Providence; but intimidation in business is not so easy in America as in England. Some of the Providence traders were men of business, and told the storekeepers of Fall River "to go home and mind their own business; for so far as they were concerned they should sell to whomsoever they pleased." The dressers were customers worth having, and Providence dealers sold to them, and the dressers obtained goods and triumphed. Shortly the spinners, weavers, and other trades joined the dressers, until twenty-one trades were united, having sixty members each, and the co-operative store soon did a business to the amount of 2,500 dollars a month. This evidence of success brought the intimidated Fall River dealers to

their senses, and then they came and offered to supply the co-operators whom they had rejected, and so Co-operation conquered in Fall River. The plan of working the society there, which is not common in English experience, is this: a committee manage its affairs at a cost of 4 per cent. for rent, buying, and selling. On the second Tuesday in each month they receive orders, which are copied out on to a large sheet with printed and descriptive headings. From the 12th to the 13th they receive money which covers all the orders. Then their buyer goes to the wholesale traders (who now raise no objection to his visits); to them he gives his orders, paying cash therewith, and on the four following evenings men appointed for the purpose serve out the purchases to the accredited applicants. The society buys nothing save what is ordered—orders nothing but what is paid for—it keeps no stock—has no bad debts—no paid storekeepers—and having no provisions on hand to keep, a small place is sufficient for its business, and that is open only four or five nights in the month.[1]

From Lombard Ville Stark Co. I learn, on the testimony of one who has been for thirty-five years a communist, that the fortunes of industry are hampered by combinations and monopolist "rings" out there. There seems to be no place where these cobras of competition do not crawl around the resources of the poor.

At the Glasgow Congress (1876) greetings were received from the Grangers of America. Mr. J. W. A. Wright, who represented them, gave me this extract from the published proceedings of those bodies: "That, having examined the plan of the co-operative societies of Great Britain, popularly known as the Rochdale plan, and the history of the humble beginning, the most remarkable success, and present grand proportions of business enterprises begun and conducted under this plan, we heartily recommend it to the careful consideration of our State and Subordinate Granges, and to the members of our order, and advise such action on the part of the executive committee of the several States as may be necessary to the organisation and operation of such co-operative associations within our order."

[1] Letters to Author, from Peter Sidebotham, Fall River, Massachusetts, formerly of Hyde, and Thomas Stephenson, of Blackburn, England.

It appears that we were once nearer than we ever shall be again to having a history of American communities. We learn from what Mr. Noyes relates, that a Scotch printer and a disciple of Mr. Owen, who had settled in New York, devoted himself between 1840 and 1854 to personally collecting materials for the history of the communities in the United States, social and co-operative, their origin, principles, progress, or decline and causes of failure. Little is known of him save that he was a person of small stature, black hair, sharp eyes, and a good-natured face. In any circular to the societies he signed himself "A. J. Macdonald." He wisely went himself to the sites of the various communities. He collected particulars of sixty-nine associative schemes, and portraits and sketches of founders and places; but unfortunately died of cholera in New York about 1854, before he had time to state in a book the results of his investigations. Mr. Jacobi was another investigator who spent several years visiting the chief communities, but his journeyings also are barren for the purposes of history. Mr. Jacobi knew the state of these establishments in 1858.

Some business-like account of all the known social schemes which the hospitable soil of the United States has received or nurtured, would be curious. Under this impression I took up Mr. Noyes' "History of American Socialisms" with interest, and laid it down without any. Mr. Noyes is an Oneidaite merely, and has no appreciation for forms of social life, except as they approximate to that peculiar creation of connubial novelties known as Oneidaism. It is allowable that he should applaud his own theory, but not that he should disparage every other. Lately there has appeared a new book on "American Communities," by William Alfred Hines. It is Oneidan in tone, but written with great freshness and vigour. It is next to Nordhoff's work in force and interest.

Mrs. Ann Stanley, known to the public as "Ann Lee," proved a most successful community-maker. She was practically the foundress of the Shakers of 1774. Eighteen societies exist at this day (1878). There is a small compendium of Shaker principles, and a Life of Ann Lee, by F. W. Evans, published by Auchampaugh Brothers, of New Lebanon. The brevity of the book is a recommendation, for it is as much as most persons will be able to bear. This body of communists

are the best known and the most frequently referred to, because they have made communism a by-word in the world by fanaticism and eccentricity. Mr. Evans's book is worth consulting, that the Shakers may be judged in the fairest way by their own professions. Ann Stanley, the foundress or chief prophetess of the order, was a Mrs. Abraham Stanley, but her people never called her by her husband's name. She appears to have had strange and disagreeable conversations with her mother on marriage previous to her own. However, her reasons for joining the Shaker Society were creditable to her, as she considered them distinguished for the clearness and swiftness of their testimony against sin—a very great merit if they knew what sin was; and if the Shakers of 1878 retain the characteristic which Mrs. Stanley believed the first Shakers to possess, they would be very useful, could they be diffused over Europe, where people of that quality are very much needed. "Mother Ann," as Mrs. Stanley came to be called, held that it could not be wrong to imitate Jesus the wifeless.

Shaker is an uncomfortable name, and gives most persons the idea of a lean, shivering enthusiast, but their conduct is that of comely, hospitable, warm-hearted persons. One acquainted with them tells me that once he met an Englishman in Alleghany. He was an old man, dejected, broken in spirit, altogether a pitiable and hopeless object. My friend advised him to make his way to a Shaker Society, of which there were then (and may be still) two in the neighbourhood of Cincinnati. He was not much inspired by the recommendation, but his abject condition overcame his scruples. A few years later he was seen on his way to Europe in search of his son, whom he desired to bring to the society in which he had found refuge. On his way he called upon the friend, Robert Aspland Cooper, who had sent him to the Shakers. His object was to leave a well-stocked trunk in Alleghany until his return. He said the society had supplied him with two, and one was more than enough. No longer dispirited or abject, his countenance beamed with happiness and gratitude as he spoke of his Shaker friends, and his hope was to place his son among them, who else probably had no future, save some Poor Law Union in England. Mrs. Stanley appears to have had good reasons for disliking marriage. The community is the bride they are

advised to wed, which receives all the more attention from the members, their affections not being diverted in any human way.

The Rappites, though they have a disturbing name, have certainly proved that even religious and restricted forms of co-operation conduce to economy. Their riches are celebrated by the friends of competition. They have acquired the name of Economites. They began in Pa. in 1803. These were they of whom Robert Owen bought New Harmony town, and 35,000 acres of land in 1824. The term "Economites," which describes their habits, is derived from the town of Economy, which they built eighteen miles below Alleghany. My correspondent, who resides near them, says they are counted as millionaires, being reputed to be worth twenty millions of dollars, or about five millions English money, not much for a community to possess, seeing that individuals of the commercial octopus class often obtain more. But regarded as the surplus wealth of a people who have all enjoyed complete prosperity—among whom no one has been a pauper, no one poor, no one having cause of care for the future, it would be difficult to find any nation so wealthy. The Economites have been extensive manufacturers of woollen goods and some silk goods. At present they manufacture nothing. The few death has left of them are past the time for labour, and unless they take in new members their wealth will probably go eventually to the State.

The Icarians under Cabet began their community in 1854. It had 60 members and 1,829 acres of land. The Cabettians were French Socialists. Cabet had no illusions like other social leaders among his countrymen. His ideal was industrial. He sought to improve life by labour and equity. Cabet made marriage obligatory in Icaria.

Disciples of Josiah Warren and Stephen Pearl Andrews have written to me to testify the growth of labour emancipation ideas in America—one proclaims himself a two-meal-a-day convert, which does not of itself point to prosperity. Whether this is an economical persuasion depends of course upon the quantity eaten, and upon this point no data has been forwarded to me. If the limitation of meals arise from pecuniary scarcity, it is to be hoped that Co-operation would supply him with the means of trinitarian repasts. In England, co-operative stores

are favourable to those who eat as often as it is wise, and awards its highest premiums to those members who do not neglect their meals. As a rule, fat reformers are found to be more congenial than lean ones; and they look better at quarterly meetings. The idea that mankind are to be saved by preaching merely appears to be waning in America, and the conviction is growing that criminals are made by bad social institutions, which ought to be superseded.

America has been the experimenting ground of schemes, mostly of European origin. It is only overcrowded cities, where competition is nearly used up, or has nearly used up the mass of the people, that new schemes of social life are desired or devised. Though caricatured by celibacy and defaced by religious and sexual eccentricities, American communities show what wealth, morality, and comfort can be had in them. The day will come when men of good sense will add intelligence and art to the material philosophy of Co-operation, and attain results that the people of many a careworn town will gladly seek. Mr. Nordhoff, a Russian writer on American communities, relates that many of them obtain a higher price in the markets for their commodities than other firms, because their commodities can be trusted. Whether seeds of the ground or work of the loom, they are known to be honest and good products. They are the only dealers in America who have known how to make honesty pay. Some say they are the only tradesmen who have attempted it. Utopianism makes money—a thing not believed in in England. Dr. B. W. Richardson has shown in his plan of a Healthy Town, that if capital should take to moral ways, and put itself to scientific uses, communities can be self-supporting, and made to pay in Great Britain, without going to America to try them. The career of the Amanes or Ebenezers shows abundantly that the crotcheteers of communism beat the "practical" co-operators of this country.

The "Ebenezers" are a colony of religious Socialists, who consider themselves under the guidance of an invisible spirit, who, however, seems to possess good business ability. Marriage is regulated by its consent; but the spirit is prudent, and is like Malthus in favour of deferred unions. This settlement is of German origin, and numbered 600 when they arrived in Buffalo from Hesse Darmstadt in 1842. They date their origin

two hundred years back. It would be curious to know what they did, and why they did it, and how they succeeded during the two hundred years of their German career. Their success could never have been what it has been in America, else we should have heard of them in Europe. Their social scheme must be as old as that of Bellers, yet no social reformers of this century have been aware of it. Their distinction, if they had any, at home would have been a fine illustration of the practicability of social theories. They must have realised what we are told is "contrary to human nature," according to those who are "set in authority over us," or who have put themselves over us—for our good. These "Ebenezers," a somewhat nasal name, call themselves in lucid intervals by the prettier term of "Amanes." When they went to the United States they settled upon an old Indian reservation of 6,000 acres, near Buffalo, New York. They found it too small for their numbers. About 1857 they moved west. They have now 30,000 acres at Amana, on the banks of the Iowa River, about seventy miles from the Mississippi — woodland and prairie pleasantly diversified. They have made progress in agriculture and other industries. The colony numbers about 1,300 (1878). They have everything in the way of property in common, but recognise the accepted form of family life, and each family has a separate house or apartments. Those who join the community contribute their property to the common stock, and, if they become dissatisfied, they receive back just what they put in, without interest or wages. Property, therefore, is no bone of contention, and no one can regard himself restricted when he is free to go where he pleases. The objects of the Amanes society are religious association, industrial and domestic co-operation, and the special advancement of the useful arts. The members dress plainly, live plainly, build plainly, but substantially. They have extensive vineyards, make and drink wine and lager beer, but drunkenness is unknown among them. They appear to have no talent for vices, commit no crimes, and have no use for courts. There is, however, a Committee of Arbitration, to settle differences when they arise. The government is administered and the whole business of the community is supervised by a board of thirteen trustees, who are elected by the votes of all the adult population, and hold

the common property. Each department of industry has its manager, who is responsible to the board of trustees, by whom he is appointed. This is what they have done in sixteen years: They found wild lands, and bridged the rivers, made good roads, planted hedges of white willow, cut a canal nearly nine miles in length to supply their needed water power, erected flourishing mills, woollen factories, machine shops, starch, sugar, and vinegar manufactories, all fitted out with fine machinery made by their own machinists. They have built five villages on the tract, and two of them are stations for the Rock Island and Pacific Railroad, which come to their doors. They have good school-houses, plain churches, and two grain elevators at the railroad stations, and buildings each of a capacity for storing 80,000 bushels of grain. The children are kept at school until they are fourteen, and then they are taught a trade or agriculture, and their education is continued in night-schools. English is taught, but German is the medium of communication in business and social life. Their religious services are simple, consisting principally of reading the Scriptures, prayer, and singing, and they have some good voices, no "School Board difficulty," and no Mr. Forster. The women assist in light outdoor work, especially in the vineyards. Early marriages are discouraged, and men are not considered of suitable age for wedlock until they attain the maturity of thirty-five years. There is a great deal of intelligence in this community, but no brilliancy. They have no "population question," no impecuniosity, no misery such as develops such fine virtues among us, and no calamities, from which English moralists deduce the salutary lessons of responsibility. Having no ecclesiastical expounders to teach them the grounds of duty, they are reduced to the necessity of doing right by good sense, and have hitherto achieved no higher distinction than that of having attained to a state of reasonable enjoyment and tame happiness, deprived of the civilised excitement of crimes; and their monotonous security is not even variegated by murder. They affront the philosophical connoisseurs of pleasure by being satisfied with satisfaction, and contented with content.

In 1844 there appeared in America the *Social Pioneer*, representing the New England Social Reform Society. Mr. J. P.

Mendum, of Boston, was the publisher, and Mr. Horace Seaver was the corresponding secretary—the same two gentlemen honourably known as editors of the *Boston Investigator*. In that year (1844) a Conference was held in Phillip's Hall, Boston, with a view of promoting social re-organisation. This Conference represented the pioneer community of Skaneateles, New York. One of the persons present was Dr. Charles Knowlton, of Ashfield, Mass., the gentleman whose name has frequently appeared in this country. The most frequent and eloquent speaker at the Convention was Mrs. Ernestine Rose, a Polish lady well known here. Mention is made then of her delicate health, which "prevented her speaking with her wonted effect." It is pleasant to report that more than thirty years later she was still a speaker of remarkable power. Origen Bacheler, of Rhode Island, famous as the opponent of Robert Dale Owen in the best-expressed discussions of modern times, appeared as an opponent in this Conference. Another adversary appeared who refused to give his name, except that he was a disciple of Christ. The chairman (Captain Taylor) accordingly announced that "the disciple of Christ had the floor." The resolutions submitted to the Conference amounted altogether to the amazing number of nearly fifty. It would be wonderful, therefore, if they did not contain some expressions to which some one could object, but they were remarkably wise, temperate, moral, secular, and social in their purport. They mark the progress of popular opinion. Christians in America and England would be found now generally claiming to agree with the spirit of them. Just as our co-operative colony at Queenwood was disappearing, the most comprehensive Conference ever held in favour of new forms of social life was held in America.

Mr. A. J. Macdonald, before mentioned, arrived at New Harmony in 1842, fifteen years after Owen's time ; he resided there two years as a bookbinder. He says after Owen's departure the majority of the population removed, and that the remainder returned to Individualism, and settled as farmers and mechanics in the ordinary way. In the preface to his unpublished work, written shortly before his death, in 1854, Macdonald says he "imagined mankind to be better than they are, and was sanguine that communism would

speedily produce brilliant results, but that years of experience in mingling with the world have shown him the 'stern reality,' and he hopes that his work will help to awaken dreamers." The fact is Macdonald was one of those capricious enthusiasts who were hopeful when social schemes were incohate and doubtful, and distrustful and despairing when they were really succeeding around him. He was a Scotch emigrant, who began by having too much fervour for Socialism, and ended, like most persons of that class, with having too little. He was, however, a man of original ways ; he was a sort of Old Mortality of Co-operation, who visited the graveyards of communities in America, deciphering the epitaphs of sixty-nine defunct phalanxes. Living by his trade, he obtained work in the neighbourhood of a communistic settlement, and spent some time in learning the particulars of its history. He wrote his account of it, and died leaving them in confusion. Mr. Noyes, into whose hands they fell, has not printed them. They deserve publication, as they must contain curious facts unknown to any other author. Mr. Noyes, who has a very mean opinion of social life, save the semi-spiritual and semi-sexual one of the Oneida pattern, is not a trustworthy reporter of Macdonald's MS. The account given me by my correspondent of New Harmony Society is probably true. Every place in which schemes of undisciplined enthusiasm have been put in operation, always prove reactionary in later years. The residents are ashamed of the failure associated with their place, and in their endeavours to repudiate it deny the existence of any liberalising influences left behind, or find some other paternity for them. All the persons I have known who have lived to repudiate their early Socialistic faith—have always remained more liberal and enlightened than they would have been had they never held it. It is singular how men of eminent experience take a partial view of the qualities of a nation, because it falls short of their ideal in a particular respect in which they look for perfection. We know from Madison's Report "of the Convention that framed the famous Constitution of America," that Washington said that "he believed *all* the virtues had left the land." Since, however, modern Americans put down slavery in it, at such a cost of blood and treasure, let us hope that some of the virtues have come back. Had

slavery existed in England for as long a time and to as great a proportional extent, it would have found abler advocates among us than it found in America, and have cost a fiercer struggle to extinguish it. The population of New Harmony in the year 1877 was but about 1,000. It had neither market nor railroad, though they were expected. The place is not what Americans call a "flourishing village." Tradesmen in it fear that the railroad (the great bringer of business) may injure them, which shows that England is not the only place where antiquated notions can nestle.

Since this chapter was written an unforeseen co-operative settlement has been founded near St. Louis, Mo., by N. O. Nelson, who has the practical genius of Cabet, but who has achieved more than Cabet's success.

CHAPTER XXXII

CO-OPERATIVE FARMING

"Parson do preach, and tell we to pray,
And to think of our work, and not ask more pay:
And to follow ploughshare, and never think
Of crazy cottage and ditch-stuff's stink,

.

And a'bids me pay my way like a man,
Whethar I can't, or whether I can:
And, as I han't beef, to be thankful for bread,
And bless the Lord it ain't turnuts instead:

.

I'm to call all I gits 'the chastening rod,'
And look up to my betters, and then thank God."

Punch.

SEEING that social schemes of life are as old as Society, and that the first form was that of communism, which meant co-operative uses of the land, it is singular that the first idea should be the last in realisation.

A much-needed employment of Co-operation is in agriculture. The most important application of it occurred in the restless land of potatoes and whiteboys. Amid the bogs of Ralahine an experiment of co-operative agriculture produced great results. The story of its singular success has been given in the chapter on "Lost Communities."

Mr. James B. Bernard, who dated from King's College, Cambridge, wrote in the *New Moral World* November 29, 1834, in favour of a scheme of raising the status of the agricultural labourer as well as the mechanic. A committee of twenty-two members of Parliament published a small 2d. monthly paper at 11, Waterloo Place, Pall Mall, in promotion of this object. Mr. E. S. Cayley, M.P. for the North Riding of Yorkshire, was chairman of this

early project. Mr. Bernard was a Fellow of Cambridge. It was not often that the *New Moral World* had so respectable a contributor. We are apt to think when we hear of a baronet or a lord contemplating setting apart 300 acres of land for the purposes of co-operative farms, that the agricultural millennium is arriving by an express train; but we may read in the *Morning Herald* of 1830 that a peer had several years before set off 500 lots of land, consisting of about five acres each, for a similar purpose.

The testimony of Lord Brougham as to what might be accomplished by uniting agricultural and other industries with instruction and culture, was very explicit. Mr. Fellenberg, of Hofwyl, in Switzerland, made a famous attempt to prove this. In the beginning of the eighteenth century Mr. Fellenberg's agricultural college was the talk of Europe. Robert Owen sent his sons to it, and Lord, then Mr., Brougham went to see it. He declared that the habits of common labour are perfectly reconcilable with those of a contemplative and even scientific life, and that a keen relish for the pleasures of speculation may be united with the most ordinary pursuits of the poor. "All this," he said, "seems to be proved by the experiment of Mr. Fellenberg. His farm is under 220 acres; his income, independent of the profit he derives from breeding horses (in which he is very skilful), and his manufacture of husbandry implements, does not exceed £500 a year. . . . The extraordinary economy," he observed, "is requisite to explain the matter: for although the academy and institute are supported by the richer pupils, these pay a very moderate sum; and the family, who are wholly supported and lodged at Hofwyl, amounts to 180 persons. These dine at six different tables, and their food though simple is extremely good." When Mr. Brougham was there he found seven or eight German princes among the pupils, besides several sons of German nobles, and the Prince and Princess of Wurtemberg were expected to visit the place to arrange for placing another young prince there. There never has been a doubt among men of observation that the agricultural life of England is the dullest and most ignominious known, as far as the labourers in southern and western counties are oncerned. Mr. Mill has applauded the

métayer system of other countries as including co-operative usages attended with many advantages. The cultivator is a métayer.

In former days any relation between labourers and farmers, in which the labourers did all the work and the farmer did not take everything, was called "co-operative" farming, Mr. John Gurdon's paternal arrangements of this kind with certain labourers at Assington, was thought much of. In 1862 the *Times* sent a commissioner to Rochdale to report upon co-operative proceedings there. In consequence of what the editor said upon the subject Mr. Gurdon wrote to the *Times*, giving his own account of what he had done, saying: "About thirty years ago, upon a small farm in Suffolk becoming vacant, I called together twenty labourers and offered to lend them capital without interest if they would undertake to farm it, *subject to my rules* and regulations. They gladly availed themselves of my offer. In the course of ten years they paid me back my capital, so that I was induced to let another farm of 150 acres to thirty men upon the same terms. These have also nearly paid me back the capital lent to them, and instead of eating dry bread, as I regret to say many of the agricultural labourers are now doing, each man has his bacon, and numberless comforts which he never possessed before; thus the rates are reduced, as these fifty families are no longer burdensome. The farmers are sure to meet with honest men, as conviction of crime would debar them of their share, and the men themselves have become much more intelligent and present happy, cheerful countenances. If every country gentleman would follow my example, distress among the agricultural poor would not be known. I merely add I have no land so well farmed." At the same time the Rev. Banks Robinson, vicar of Little Wallingfield, Suffolk, living near Mr. Gurdon's place, wrote to the *Co-operator* to say he had visited Assington and thought highly of Mr. Gurdon's friendliness to the labourers and the kind intention of his plans, but they were not co-operative as the word was understood in Rochdale. Ten years later my colleague, Mr. E. R. Edger, visited Mr. Crisell, the manager of the farm whom the Rev. Mr. Robinson had found to be of "manly, open, and ingenious

appearance," beyond what he expected of one belonging to the "depressed" class. Mr. Edger sent me this report :—

"I paid a visit to Assington, and had a conversation with the manager, Mr. Crisell (pronounced with i long, 'Cry-sell'). I can feel no enthusiasm at all about the Assington Farm. There seems no 'co-operation' in the right sense of the term, but only *bounty* of the squire towards poor neighbours.

"(1) It is limited to inhabitants of the parish.

"(2) Each member can hold only *one* share.

"(3) Members have no voice in the management.

"(4) Wages to workmen same as usual.

"(5) No special inducement offered to the workmen to become shareholders. The manager remarked that they did not care particularly to employ the members; this seems to me very significant.

"It has been in existence forty-one years, so it will take a long time to renovate society that way. Remember, I only give my *impressions*."

Still they are the "impressions" any one has who looks at the matter from a co-operative point of view. Mr. Gurdon's merit was that he did something for labourers around him when few squires did anything; and his isolated example has served to call the attention of others to what may be done without loss by squires of ordinary good intentions. That what Mr. Gurdon did in this way should be the only notable effort of his class during forty years in England, is the most melancholy measure of the tardiness of thought for the agricultural labourer's improvement the reader will find anywhere.

What an honourable stride from Assington is that made by Lord George Manners at Ditton Lodge Farm, near Newmarket! Writing to the *Agricultural Gazette*, in 1873, his lordship states :—

"At my harvest supper in August, 1871, I informed my labourers that, commencing from Michaelmas, 1872, I should take them into a qualified partnership, paying them their ordinary wages, but dividing between capital and labour any surplus above the sum required to pay 10 per cent. (5 per cent. as interest, and 5 per cent. as profit) on the capital invested in the business: or, in other words, that I should

take half such surplus, and divide the other half among those who had laboured on the farm the whole of the preceding twelve months. I have recently made up accounts for the twelve months ending Michaelmas, 1873, and I have a surplus, after paying capital 10 per cent., of £71 16s. 6d.; there will, therefore, be a sum of £36 18s. 3d. for division among the labourers, which will give each man a sum of £3. Many will shake their heads and say, 'All very well; but if the next is a bad year, you will have to bear the whole loss.' My answer is, 'Quite true; *but who can say that my loss may not be less than it would otherwise have been, owing to the stimulus which this system can scarcely fail to exert on the labourer in his daily work?*"

The answer here italicised denotes greater knowledge of Co-operation than many co-operators show. Mr. William Lawson, of Blennerhasset Farm, had a famous stallion which he named "Co-operation." Some Newmarket breeder would find "Industrial Partnership" a good name for the favourite at the Derby.

Lord Hampton, when Sir John Pakington, spoke in 1872 with great liberality upon the same subject. He said "he supported the idea of co-operative farms and an extension of the system of co-operative stores into every village of the kingdom. As to the question of compensation for unexhausted improvements, he considered that such compensation was only simple justice. In the lease there should be covenants to protect the landlord in the concluding years of the term, and there should be equal justice to the tenant for unexhausted improvements."

Mr. Walter Morrison has afforded the means for farm hands conducting a real co-operative farm at Brampton Bryan, in Herefordshire. As a rule few landowners think seriously of the advantages of this form of industry, and labourers have fewer facilities of learning how to conduct farms than artisans have of learning how to conduct manufactories, so that co-operative farming will make slower progress than co-operative workshops. For a farm to succeed in the hands of labourers requires the presence and guidance of a good farmer, until they acquire the habits of management. The Assington labourers would not have made much of the facilities Mr.

Gurdon kindly provided, had he not been near to countenance and control the results.

The most remarkable of all the experiments of agricultural co-operation is that recorded by Mr. William Lawson (a brother of Sir Wilfrid Lawson, M.P.) in his "Ten Years of Gentleman Farming." Mr. Lawson spent more than £30,000 in this way. Though this large sum was spent it could hardly be said to be lost, since at any point of his many experiments he might have made money had he been so minded. But he proceeded on the plan of a man who built one-storey houses, and as soon as he found that they let at a paying rent, pulled them down and built two-storey houses to see if they would pay, and when he found that they answered, he demolished them, and put up houses of three storeys, and no sooner were they profitably occupied, than he turned out the inhabitants and pulled them down. What he lost was by the rapidity of his changes, rather than by the failure of his plans, for he had sagacity as great as the generosity of his intentions. His chief farm was at Blennerhasset, in Cumberland. He was the first to introduce the steam plough into the country, and every form of scientific farming matured between 1860 and 1870. He maintained for the use of his neighbours, two travelling steam engines, which he named Cain and Abel. He founded co-operative stores, supplying the capital himself, which ill-judged paternalism destroyed self-helping effort in the members. At Blennerhasset he founded a People's Parliament, where all those employed upon the various farms and all the villagers, periodically assembled and discussed the management of the co-operative farms and the qualities and characters of the managers. This was a dangerous feature borrowed from Oneida. The result to the farm was great variety of counsel, and some of the drollest debates and votes ever recorded. The effect upon the people was, however, very good. Mr. Lawson's plan of inviting miscellaneous criticism is not so silly as it looks. If you do not feel bound to take all the advice you get, and are strong enough not to be confused by contradictory opinions, there is no more economical way known of getting wisdom. Even disagreeable people have their value in this way. There must be

education of some kind, at least of neighbourly feeling, for it is easy to promote the welfare of those you like, but how about the people you do not like? When quarrelsome people come into such a society they begin to discuss, not the merits of the society, but each other. It is a difficult thing for people to act together—neither people devoted to politics nor people devoted to religion can do it without training. Some years after the farms were sold, I found more intelligence and ready sense among the villagers than I ever met with elsewhere. On a plot of land at Aspatria, bearing the name of Noble, Mr. Lawson built Noble Temple, a public hall, always available for lectures. He also established medical dispensaries, schools, and news-rooms. No agricultural population was ever so liberally or generously cared for in England. Mr. Lawson's "Ten Years of Gentleman Farming" is the most interesting and amusing book in co-operative literature. Never was landowner more sagacious, inventive, genial, liberal or changeable—not in his generous purpose but in his methods. Had he been less paternal and taught his people the art of self-help, he had been a great benefactor.

The rise of the Agricultural Labourers' Union had the effect of promoting Distributive Co-operation. Many labourers never heard of Co-operation, or did not think much of it, though acquainted with it. The general impression was that it might do very well for mechanics in towns. This kind of impression is not peculiar to agricultural labourers. Most people consider new improvement may suit somebody else. The comfortable sense of self-perfection, with which many persons are endowed, leads to a complacent judgment we so well know. One of the co-operative stores recently set up by the members of the Agricultural Union numbered sixty persons. Their business and profits being in considerable confusion, Mr. John Butcher was asked to look into their affairs. He saw at once that they needed an intelligent secretary. "Have you no carpenter among you," was his first inquiry, "one with a little skill in figures, who could keep your books?" The answer was, "We have no such person." "Surely," Mr. Butcher observed, "you do not mean to say that there is no carpenter in the village?" "Oh

yes," was the answer—"we have several, but they are not members of the Union." "You do not mean to say that you require every member of the store to be a member of the Union?" The unhesitating reply was, "Oh, but we do. The doctor and the parson would have joined our store, to have encouraged us to improve our position, but we would not have them because they were not members of the Union." And it turned out that the lawyer would have joined the store, but did not see his way to becoming a member of the Union. It transpired that a noble earl, having property in the neighbourhood, and a seat hard by, would have joined the store, from an honourable feeling of encouraging the poor men in efforts of social self-help, but he was refused because he had not qualified himself by entering his name as a member of the Agricultural Labourers' Union. Mr. Butcher explained to the exacting labourers that Co-operation took no account of politics, religion, or social station, and regarded members only as they subscribed capital and purchased goods. Thus, some of these stipulating Unionists, whom exclusiveness treated as a caste, and whom isolation kept poor, came to see that it ill became them to imitate the narrowness which degraded them, and the jealousy which impoverished them.

In 1867 the Society of Agricultural Co-operation named previously was formed under the title of the Agricultural and Horticultural Association, Limited. The following table shows its progress from 1868 to 1877 :—

Date.	Members.	Share Capital.	Deposit Capital.	Sales.	Net Gain to Members.
		£	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
1868	174	1,066	—	10,342 0 5	403 2 3
1869	235	3,584	—	19,102 4 3	433 6 5
1870	315	4,256	—	21,521 2 8	1,151 6 4
1871	430	5,275	—	29,351 0 11	1,127 18 11
1872	578	9,045	1,165 18 0	47,490 2 5	2,083 9 8
1873	783	12,153	3,958 4 8	50,336 15 2	2,585 5 9
1874	892	13,542	7,793 6 8	64,676 15 8	2,914 1 11
1875	978	15,352	6,515 18 2	64,428 2 3	1,741 9 0
1876	1,041	15,955	17,360 9 8	66,405 1 0	—
1877	1,113	16,495	14,279 15 8	89,334 4 11	3,120 16 8

Some of the Northern stores possess farm property, but agricultural Co-operation has not made distinctive way. Landowners, friendly to self-help among the people, are now disposed to encourage these attempts. Mr. Arthur Trevelyan, of Tyneholm, always foremost where social improvement can be promoted, offered the Wolfstar and Wester Pencaitland farms for co-operative purposes. It is quite worth the while of squires to efface the feeling Bloomfield described among the agricultural poor of his day, who were—

> "Left distanced in the maddening race
> Where'er Refinement showed its hated face."

CHAPTER XXXIII

ECCENTRIC AND SINGULAR SOCIETIES

"An obstacle to the co-operation of working men is the difficulty of getting good, sufficient, and trustworthy instruments for giving it effect; but wherever that can be done, I commend it without limit. I cannot say what I think of the value of it. I hope it will extend to other things which it has scarcely yet touched. I hope it will extend to all the amusements and recreations of the working men. It fosters a strong sentiment of self-respect among working men."—THE RIGHT HON. W. E. GLADSTONE *at Hawarden, Speech to Leigh and Tyldesley Liberal Clubs, September, 1877.*

No rapidity of narration, no compression of sentences, consistent with explicitness, can bring into a small compass all the incidents and all the societies which deservedly challenge notice. There is no choice save that of noticing the salient features only of those societies which stand as it were upon the highway of Co-operation. There are always incidents, amusing or tragical, in beginnings by small means where success came by the economy of combination.

The societies which reported themselves in 1877 to the Registrar of Friendly Societies, and those which did not (and are not given in detail), numbered upwards of a thousand. The reader must therefore imagine for himself the prolonged panorama on which these thousand stores might be depicted, as interesting in their way as the Thousand and One Arabian Nights.

Professor Masson tells us that Herodotus mentions 100, Aristotle 120 forms of diverse life: communal in some sort, all succeeding in their day. In hundreds of places in Great Britain where Co-operation has arisen again and again and had its stores and workshops, no tradition remains that such stores existed among their forefathers long ago. Most of the

stores mentioned in the following list are deader than the Dead Cities of the Zuyder Zee, for not a trace of them remains. But happily live co-operative cities stand on their ruins.

The six earliest societies in England on the co-operative plan were the following :—

Birmingham (Tailor's Shop), 1777.
Mongewell Oxfordshire (Store), 1794.
Hull (Corn Mill), 1795.
Woolwich (Store), 1806.
Davenport (Store), 1815.
New Lanark (Store), 1816.
London Economical Society (Printers), 1821.

MANCHESTER AND SALFORD SOCIETIES,

EXISTING IN 1829 AND 1830.

FIRST CHARLTON ROW, Evan Street, Charlton Row, established May 3, 1829—18 members—weekly subscriptions 1s. 1d.—capital £100—weekly dealings £20—principle to divide at four years' end.

ECONOMICAL, Frederick Street, Salford, established August 22, 1829—30 members—weekly subscription 3d.—capital £57—weekly dealings £25—principle, division.

TEMPERANCE, 15, Oldfield Road Salford, established October 26, 1829—40 members—weekly subscription 3d.—capital £42—weekly dealings £14—principle, non-division.[1]

INDEPENDENT HOPE, Hope Street, Salford, established February 26, 1830—45 members—weekly subscription 3d.—capital £70—weekly dealings £60—principle, non-division.

PERSEVERANCE, 13, Shepley Street, London Road, Manchester, established April 12, 1830—56 members—weekly subscription 4d.—capital £24 weekly dealings £11—principle, non-division.

AMICABLE, Ormond Street, Charlton Row, established May 1, 1830—24 members—weekly subscription 4d.—capital £10—weekly dealings £7—principle, non-division.

FRIENDLY, Bentley's Court, Miles Platting, established April 10, 1830—27 members—weekly subscription 4d.—capital £18—weekly dealings £6—principle, non-division.

BENEVOLENT, Sandford Street, Ancoats, established April 22, 1830—124 members—weekly subscription 4d.—capital £45—weekly dealings £46—library 50 books—principle, non-division.

GOOD INTENT, Hope Town, Salford, established May 8, 1830—48 members—weekly subscription 3d.—capital £10—weekly dealings £7—principle, non-division.

FORTITUDE, Long Millgate, established June 1, 1830—15 members—weekly subscription 3d.—capital £2—weekly dealings £1—principle, non-division.[2]

[1] This means that profits were being accumulated for the purpose chiefly of reconstituting the world. Co-operators worked on that scale in those days.

[2] The lofty buildings of the Co-operative Union stands in Millgate now, preserving its co-operative prestige.

The following is a list of the Societies existing in London and around of which mention is made in co-operative publications of 1830–3. A few of later date are included from subsequent periodicals :—

LONDON SOCIETIES.

Societies' Names.	Place of Meeting.	Storekeeper.
First London	19, Greville Street, Hatton Garden	W. Lovett.
Second London ...	6, Little Windmill St., Golden Sq....	W. Watkins.
First West London ...	33, Queen Street, Bryanstone Square	W. Freeman.
New London	17, Plumber Street, Old Street Road.	—
London Branch A1 ...		C. Gold.
First Soho	27, Denmark Street, St. Giles ...	J. Elliot.
Lambeth and Southwark	3, Webber Street, Waterloo Road ...	J. Booth.
First Westminster ...	37, Marsham Street, Vincent Square	— Jarrold.
First Pimlico	8, Ranelagh Street	—
First St. James' ...	5, Rose Street, Crown Court, Soho...	—
Pimlico		—
First Finsbury	69, Old Street Road	Committee.
Somers Town	22, Great Clarendon Street... ...	—
Islington	"White Horse," Back Road ...	—
Islington Methodists ...	6, High Street, Islington Green ...	—
Hampstead	"Duke of Hamilton"	Not trading.
Pentonville	Chapel Street	—
First Bethnal Green ...	9, South Conduit Street	J. Bredell.
Second ,, ...	17, West Street, North Street ...	—
Third ,, ...	"Norfolk Arms"	—
Fourth ,, ...	Wilmot Grove	—
Fifth ,, ...	School, Sydney Street, Twigg's Folly	R. Oliver.
Sixth ,, ...	10, Thomas Street, Buck Lane ...	T. Riley.
Seventh ,, ...	"Well and Bucket," Church Street	—
Middlesex	22, St. Ann's Court, Wardour Street	— Basset.
,, Second ...	8, Berwick Street, Soho	Not trading.
First Southwark ...	"Gun," Joiner St., Westminster Rd.	—
Southwark	"Black Bull," Bull Crt., Tooley St.	—
Cooper's, Ratcliff ...	75, Heath Street, Commercial Road	S. Sennitt.
North London... ...	"Duke of Clarence," Pancras Road	—
Second West London ...	11, Duke Street, Lincoln's Inn Flds.	—
	"The King's Head," Swinton St., Gray's Inn Road	—
Hand in Hand... ...	"The Crown," Red Cross Street ...	—
First Hoxton	"The Bacchus," Old Hoxton ...	—
Kingsland		—
Bow		—
Whitechapel		—
First Stepney		—
First Bloomsbury ...	"Bull and Mouth," Hart Street ...	—
Metropolitan	Eagle Coffee House, Farringdon St.	Committee.
First Kennington ...	The Union, Vassal Road	—
First Chelsea	36, Regent Street, Chelsea Common	Committee.
Knightsbridge		—
Kensington	Birch's School Room	—
United Christians ...	74, Leonard Street, Shoreditch ...	G. Richardson.
Methodists	Newel, Baker, Wardour Street, Soho	—
St. George, Hanover Sq.	"Portsmouth Arms," Shepherd St.	Not trading.

"None of these societies," it was stated, "are at present manufacturing, but the Owenian expects to begin shortly. With the exception of the Benevolent they are not yet provided with libraries." They had the sense in those days to make apologetic confession of the absence of means of acquiring knowledge.

The following societies are placed alphabetically for convenience of reference. The year of their formation is given where it has been traced. Those without dates mostly existed between 1830 and 1833:—

A	
Allerton	1829
Almondbury	"
Aberdeen	"
Ardsley	1831
Armitage Bridge	1830
Armagh	"
Ayr	1838
Ashton	"
Ackworth	1834
Anstey	1828
Accrington	
Ashby-de-la Zouch	
B	
Birmingham Taylors Manufacturing Society	1777
" Store	1828
Broadbottom	1831
Belper	1829
Barnstaple	"
Brighton	1826
Blackfriars	"
Bradford	1829
Bury	"
Barnsley	"
Bolton	"
Boothfold	1831
Birkacre	"
Barns	"
Broadford	"
Burslem	1830
Bath	1838
Bristol	"
Bilston	"
Bridgnorth	"
Brighlingren	1832
Bolton-le-Moor	"
Blackburn	"
Burnley	"
Banbury	"
Burton-on-Trent	"
Bromsgrove	1832
Bungay	"
C	
Canterbury	1829
Congleton	"
Chatham	"
Clitheroe	"
Clayton	"
Coventry	"
Cambridge	"
Cumberworth	1829–1832
Cheltenham	1830
Carlisle	"
Clayton Heights	1833
Chester	1830
Chorley	
Cockermouth	
Colne	
Chowbent	
Cromford	
Cambuslang (Scotland)	1829
D	
Devonport	1815
Darlington	1827
Derby	"
Derby	1829
Dolphin	1833
Dudley	
Daventry	
E	
Exeter	1826
Eccleshill	1833
Exhall	1832
F	
Finsbury (see London Societies)	1829
Foleshill	"
Farnley Tyas	1833
Failsworth	
G	
Glasgow	1829
Godalming	1830
Greenock	1838
Garstang	"
H	
Halifax	1829
Hastings	"
Horton	"
Highroyd	"
Huddersfield	1829–1832
Hothorne	1829
Holmfirth	1832
Hulme	1831
Holbeck	1830
Holywell	1830
Holdsworth	1832
Horton Bank Top	1833
Horbury	1830
Hyde	
Hereford	
I	
Ipswich	1829
Indiana (America[1])	1826
J	
Jersey, New	1826
Jamy Green	1835
Jedburgh	1830
K	
Kidderminster	1829
Keighley	"
Kendal	"
Kearsley	1831
Kenilworth	
L	
Lamberhead Green, Wigan	1830

[1] Though this was not an English Store, it was founded by Englishmen.

London (see List of Metropolitan Societies) 1821
Leeds 1829
Loughborough, 1829–1832
Lindley 1832
Liverpool 1830– ,,
Longroyd ,,
Leicester 1829, ,,
Longford, near Coventry 1832
Lower Houses, near Huddersfield 1834
Leigh
Lynn
Leamington
Lutterworth
Leeks
Lancaster

M

Manchester (see Manchester and Salford Societies) 1829
Macclesfield ,,
Morley ,,
Marylebone ,,
Maidstone ,,
Mansfield ,,
Millsbridge 1830
Miles Platting ,,
Marseilles[1] ,,
Mixenden Lane 1832
Mixenden Stones ,,
Mixenden Rocks ,,
Mottram
Malpas
Mossley
Melross

N

Nottingham 1827
Newark 1831
Norwich 1827
New Mill 1832
New Catton 1830
Newchurch 1827
Newcastle
Northampton

O

Oldham 1832
Oldbury ,,
Outwood 1831
Oxford 1830
Orbiston (Scotland) 1826

P

Paris 1821
Preston 1829
Prestolee 1830
Pilkington ,,
Poole ,,
Peniston 1833
Padiham ,,
Penkridge ,,
Pudsey ,,

Q

Queenshead 1829

R

Rochdale 1830
Ralahine (Ireland) 1831
Runcorn 1830
Ratcliffe ,,
Ripponden 1832
Rastrick 1833

S

Sheepshead 1829
Stone ,,
Soho ,,
Sheffield 1830
Salford 1829
Stockport 1839
Shipley 1830
Stamford ,,
Shelley ,,
Stockmoor ,,
St. Colombo, Cornwall 1830
Syston ,,
St. James ,,
Stourbridge 1830
Southampton ,,
Stratford
Sandbeds 1833
Shibden 1829
Stafford
Shrewsbury
Shiffnall

T

Thorne 1829
Tunbridge Wells ,,
Thurstanland 1830
Thames Ditton ,,
Twickenham ,,
Thurmaston ,,
Todmorden
Tarporley
Tabley (Derbyshire)

U

Uley 1829
Upperley 1830
Unsworth 1832

W

Worcester 1829
Westminster ,,
Worthing 1828
Whitehaven 1829
Wallingford ,,
Warrington ,,
Woolton ,,
Wigan ,,
Warley (near Halifax) 1831
Wasboro' Bridge 1832
Worksworth (Derbyshire)
Wells
Wolverhampton 1832
Walsall ,,
Wellington ,,
Wellingborough ,,
Warwick ,,
Wisbech ,,

Y

Yarmouth
York 1830

There were 125 Co-operative Associations in England and Scotland in 1829. They were stated to amount to 250 in 1830, to which number they doubtless amounted, as they were often estimated by competent authorities in those days at 300.[2] Forty co-operative societies were formed in London, and about

[1] This store was of English inspiration.
[2] In the little work by Messrs. Acland and Jones the number of the societies is somewhat different, but the reason is not stated, and when I asked for it information was refused.

400 in various parts of the country, so far back as 1833; and four of them, all in Yorkshire, still remain (1877).

In Chapter XVI. the reader has seen the account of the Birmingham Co-operative Workshop of 1777, and in Chapter VIII. Bishop Barrington's masterly little history of the first store, known in 1794 as the Village Shop of Mongewell.

The third of the early stores was one established in Hull in 1795. It was not a mere shop, but a society. It was formed by a few persons for the sale of the necessaries of life at lower prices than were current among the ordinary retailers. Their transactions were more particularly in wheat and flour. Eventually it became a corn mill purely, and has continued to be known as such.

The Hull Industrial Corn Mill is the oldest in the parliamentary return of 1863, the society there dating 1795. Its members were given at 3,818, 701 having joined during the year 1863, and none withdrawn, and yet its members in the 1862 returns were only given at 1,900. By what error this arose was not explained. Its shares of 1862 were 50s. each; in 1863 they were 25s.; the total amount of which is £4,776, on which it paid 5 per cent. per annum interest. Mr. Nuttall remarked,[1] "Its sale receipts in 1863 were £38,821, and profit £2,947, or nearly 62 per cent. on share capital, and 7½ per cent. on sale receipts, or, as co-operators generally say, about 1s. 6d. per £ for dividend."

If the early books of the Society of the Corn Mill exist, they might show what manner of people began it, what was their inspiration, and what were their early adventures.

In October, 1806, twenty-six of the workmen in the Arsenal at Woolwich determined to resist extortionate demands of the shopkeepers; they each subscribed 10s. 6d., and sent one of themselves to Smithfield, where for £20 they purchased a bullock. It was found that in this manner the price of their meat was reduced exactly one-half—from 9d. to 4½d. per lb. Their effort had been generally ridiculed, but its success could not be denied. They were speedily joined by a large number of other workmen, and were soon able to rent a shed at £20 per annum, where they occasionally had as many as fifteen cattle at a time. It was not long before they

[1] "English Leader." Edited by the Author.

acted upon the same principle in respect to other articles of their consumption. They bought tea by the chest, butter by the load; plums for their Christmas pudding by wholesale; they contracted for bread at a reduced price. The movement, while it lasted, was very successful; but the termination of the war put an end to it. The workmen were thrown out of employment to relapse into the misery from which they had emerged. It is singular that dealing in meat, which has been the difficulty of nearly every co-operative society, and for many years a loss in most, and has had to be abandoned altogether in others, should have been the great success of the Woolwich Society, the first which undertook its sale.

Co-operation, extinguished at Woolwich, reappeared at Devonport in 1815. A shop for the sale of bread was opened in the town; a corn mill was erected at Toybridge, thirteen miles distant. It still exists under the name of "Union Mill." To the bakery was added a coal association, which shared its prosperity. It is worthy of remark that coal selling, which has often been a difficulty and loss elsewhere, was one of the successes at Devonport.

Mr. Jonathan Wood informed me in 1872 that he was the second storekeeper of the Co-operative Benevolent Fund Association (begun 1827), then at 31, West Street, Brighton. Mr. William Bryan was the first, who left suddenly for America. Why do not persons who emigrate abruptly send remittances? Since 1829 that departure is remembered. The store took land about nine miles from Brighton, built a house upon it, cultivated a market garden, and sent the produce to the Brighton market. The store had two cows, two horses and carts, and many pigs. Mr. Jonathan Wood says, "They did wonders enough to prove what might have been done had the people been honest enough to do it. Dishonesty of those on the land broke the affair up." This is one of the many examples in which the want of legal protection destroyed early stores. Fifty years later (in 1877) Brighton did not do one-tenth as much in co-operation as it did in 1827.[1] The Brighton Society reported in the *Associate* for May, 1829, that

[1] In 1888 it recommenced with a store—built a bakery in 1902, and has now branches at Hove and Portslade.

"early in 1828 a member of the name of G. H. left us for his native place (Worthing), and there formed a society very similar to our own, except the payment to the common fund. With them it was formed only for profit ; and from this has sprung up, as a branch, a society at Findon. The Worthing Co-operative Society soon found reason to regret having begun business in a manner too expensive for its extent. The hire of a shop and salary of a person for his whole time were unnecessary for the first months of their undertaking ; besides transferring as much as £70 worth of their goods to the branch at Findon. Though there seemed a fair opening at that village, and some hearty friends to co-operative views came forward, it was a hazardous step for a society so young as that of Worthing." When I was in Worthing in 1877 I spoke with several members who were quite unaware of the pre-existence of a co-operative society there in 1828.

The *Chester Co-operator* for 1830 took for its motto two long extracts from the *Brighton Co-operator* of 1829. It is one of the many instances I have found of the influence of Sussex co-operation. It is encouragement to advocates to hear of numerous societies which were formed by so small a paper as the *Brighton Co-operator*, issued by Dr. King. It consisted of merely two small leaves published monthly. A single number of the *Co-operative News* contains as much matter as the yearly volume of the *Co-operator* did.

According to the account given by Dr. King to Lord Brougham, the Brighton Co-operative Society of 1828 was quite a curiosity in its way. Its funds were raised by penny subscriptions. It had 170 members, who ultimately accumulated £5, with which they commenced their store, and their first week's sales amounted to half-a-crown ! The administration of the affairs of this society must have been simpler than that of Mongewell. Total receipts of half-a-crown a week could not have been perplexing to the most bewildered storekeeper. The early Rochdale Pioneers, with £28 of capital, were wealthy tradesmen compared with those of Brighton.

A Brighton Co-operative Benevolent Fund Association was formed in April, 1827, which spread a knowledge of the principles of Co-operation, and sent industrious families, not having the means of journeying, to any co-operative under-

taking where they might be required. The original Brighton society changed its objects three times, and varied its regulations accordingly. The south coast co-operators, nevertheless, did much for Co-operation in their day.

Darlington furnishes an early instance of a store coming out of a strike. This was in 1827. The wool-combers and stuff weavers of Bradford struck in that year for higher wages, and the wool-combers and linen weavers of Darlington participated in the movement. At the conclusion of the strike the combers and wool-sorters of Darlington started a co-operative grocery. The president of the trade society of Darlington, out of which the store originated, was John Brownless, a linen weaver, and it had for its secretary George Elwin, a shoemaker. The store traded under the name of Topham & Co. After a few years it fell into a few hands, and ultimately became the private affair of John Topham.

Twelve years later, in the turbulent year of the Chartists, 1839, the Socialists and Chartists of Darlington set up another co-operative provision store. The shares were ten shillings each. John Brownless,[1] son of the Mr. Brownless previously named, was one of the directors. This store proposed to give a dividend to shareholders and a share of profits to customers, who were required to have their purchases entered in a book as they made them. One Nicholas Bragg was salesman. Domestic difficulty in his household brought the society into unpopularity, and it broke up by a distribution of salts and senna to each member, being probably the only unsold stock. This is the oddest final dividend that is to be met with in the annals of co-operation. Subsequently, allured, peradventure, by the curious medicinal "bonus" of the last society, the Oddfellows set up a third store in Darlington. With a portion of their funds they started a co-operative grocery under the charge of one John Brason as salesman. This was in 1842. But as it was in the beginning, so it was in the end. Before long the store fell into private ownership.

In London a store was opened in John Street, Tottenham Court Road, for the sale of tea and groceries as early as 1830. This is worth mentioning, as John Street was the most famous

[1] Who emigrated to the Western World in 1842 and settled at Akron Summit Co., Ohio, and from whose letters I gather these facts.

propagandist street in London, next to Charlotte Street. In the same year Mr. Allan Devonport's name appears as offering to prepare a Co-operative Catechism. This was the first proposal to devise that useful instrument of propagandist statement. A man must find out what he means, if he did not know before, if he constructs a successful catechism. Davenport was, when I knew him, well advanced in years, slender in frame, gentle, earnest, and steadfast in advocating views. Temperate, frugal, and industrious, yet he never had sufficient for proper subsistence. He never complained and never ceased to try and improve the condition of his order. He was a writer on agrarianism, which never had a milder advocate.

A stranger hardly knows what to make of Birmingham. It is not teacup-shaped, like Rochdale, nor a cavity like Stockport, nor a ravine like Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Birmingham is neither quite flat nor properly elevated. It is not a plate, nor a dish, nor a tea-tray, nor any compound of plane and rim. It is a disturbed tableland, bounded by woods and blast furnaces. If you could approach it *viâ* Hagley, you might mistake it for Derby; if you reach it through "Dudley Port," you would take it to be Sodom and Gomorrah in the act of undergoing destruction. In 1820–30 the business part of the town was an expanded Whitechapel, variegated by a Bethnal Green—being in this case "Deritend," where the Old Crown House, five hundred years old, still stands sound. Owing to municipal energy and sense Birmingham is growing into a great pleasant, civilised community. It is precisely that kind of town where Co-operation should succeed. There was a reputed co-operative store near the Town Hall, Birmingham, between 1860 and 1870—a mere shop. Its profits were not capitalised—it had no news-room. Its administrators were frigid—the members had no co-operative passion. The store failed from not knowing its own reason of being.[1] In Birmingham co-operative "dead men" lie thick about—and some live men too, for real stores have arisen there since.

As well as a reputed "Co-operative" Farm, Assington, in Suffolk, has a real sort of store. A member of the original Assington Co-operative Society wrote a letter in the *Co-operator* of January 10, 1869, "the first time," he said, "they had

[1] Letter to *Birmingham Gazette*, September, 1877.

attempted to write to a newspaper," which proved them to be the quietest co-operators known.

There was a Manchester society in 1831, which had a storekeeper of the imposing name of William Shelmerdine, who gave a short and instructive account of the formation of the first Manchester co-operative society.[1] As the city of Manchester would appear to be a natural seat of Co-operation, and as the society was well conceived, well devised, and had reasonable and practical ideas of self-expansion, the mystery is not explicable now why it failed to be a leading and distinguished association. It bore the winning name of the "Economical Society," and its rooms were at 7, Rodger's Row, Jackson's Row, Deansgate, Manchester. Mr. Shelmerdine stated that it was founded on the 28th of August, 1830, by eight persons who agreed to form a co-operative trading society and to pay £1 each as a share, and not less than threepence per week. Four of them paid the £1 down, and the other four one shilling each as entrance money. With this £4 4s. they bought sugar, soap, and candles, which they sold to themselves and others. They soon found confidence to add to their stock rice, coffee, and raisins. At the end of the month they found their profits, they said, accumulating fast. They no doubt were astonished to make a profit at all, and thought much of the little they made. With it, however, they at once bought some leather, and employed one of their members to make and mend shoes for them. With new profits they bought stockings, worsted, linen, and flannel, manufactured by other co-operators. They were poor hitherto, they had seen nothing before them but poverty and degradation, and they were delighted at discovering that they could place themselves above the fear of want by working for themselves and among themselves. So they came to the unanimous resolution to begin manufacturing stout goods, fast-coloured ginghams for themselves and other co-operative societies. The Economical Society by this time numbered thirty-six members; amongst them were spinners, warpers, weavers, dyers, joiners, hatters, shoemakers, tin-plateworkers. They had a shop well stocked with provisions, with woollen cloth manufactured by the co-

[1] See *Lancashire and Yorkshire Co-operator*, No. 12, 1832. There was a society in Salford in 1829, as elsewhere recorded.

operators of Huddersfield, linens, checks, and calicoes made by the society at Lamberhead Green, stockings from Leicester, flannel from Rochdale, pins from Warrington. The magnitude of their business, which excited so much hope, would be thought very little of now. At their stock-taking in August, 1831—the date was the 28th—they record that memorable day (a shorter day in the year would have been sufficient for their purpose), when their stock was found of the value of £46 12s. The subscriptions which they had received amounted to only £26 10s. and their profits to £20 2s. They gave as a reason for purchasing their articles at co-operative societies, that they "knew they were made of good material and showed good workmanship, entirely different in character to the light articles commonly made for mere sale, and not for wear and durability." The members met twice a week at their own meeting-room at the store for discussing their business, and general conversation, thus avoiding public-house diminution of profits, and they looked forward to the day their numbers and means would enable them to establish a school for the instruction of their children, and a library and reading-room for the improvement of their members. This early store, therefore, combined all the good features of a co-operative association—good articles, good workmanship, mutual employment, the acquirement of economical and temperate habits and instruction for themselves and children. They relate, however, that when they contemplated manufacturing gingham they saw their error in fixing their shares at £1. Their reason was that they might not deter poor persons from joining them. They did commence manufacturing. Two of their members having a little money in the savings bank, courageously brought it to them, and it was agreed that they should have 5 per cent. interest for it.

The great store in Downing Street, where the Congress met in 1878, has not the complete co-operative features of this humble store in Manchester of nearly half a century earlier. At the first Manchester Congress of 1832 it was reported also that the first Salford co-operators had established a Co-operative Sunday School, at which 104 male and female adults and children were taught, and they intended to request Lady Shelley to become a patroness.

Mr. George Simpson, of Mottram, who was the general secretary of the Queenwood Community before mentioned, prepared the rules of the United Journeymen Hatters of Denton, about 1840, of which he was secretary. From the first year every member was required to be a shareholder of £5, and he could pay up the amount by such labour as might be prescribed by the directors. When profits arose enabling interest to be paid it was limited to 5 per cent., and the surplus profit might be applied by the directors in augmenting the property of the society. It took no credit, and gave none. It was a well-managed manufacturing society, and had a useful career so long as Mr. Simpson was able to remain with it.

In 1860 the Co-operative Printing Society of Manchester was formed. A hundred shares were taken a few minutes after the decision to form it was come to, which shows with what alacrity societies are formed in districts where there are men who understand them. This society covers a good deal of ground now, and has a branch at Newcastle-on-Tyne. Mr. John Hardman was manager of the Manchester society. The first volume of this History was printed there. There is a Printing Society in London of some years' standing, which had a secretary who abstracted £2,000 of its funds, possibly with a view to test its stability. The proof was satisfactory to the secretary but not to the society.[1] Mr. Robert Taylor, formerly of the Colchester store, was the next manager, and the second volume of this History was printed by this society. In 1877, when the new Town Hall of Manchester was opened, 400 co-operators from various parts of England, delegates to a quarterly meeting of the Wholesale Society, were received by the Mayor (Alderman Abel Heywood), who addressed them after he had shown them the new Town Hall. He said that "he became a member of a co-operative society in the year 1828. These societies were then in their infancy, and those at the head of them did not understand how to manage them in the way they are managed now. Since 1830 the co-operative societies which existed in Manchester at that

[1] He used to come to me on Saturday afternoon for a loan of £5 to pay the workmen. He might have drawn upon the £2,000 he had sequestrated. I sent in a claim to the directors for the money obtained from me by their agent. They refused to pay me on the grounds that I had no business to advance it, which my sympathy for the men led me to do.

time, some twenty-four in number, had dwindled away, because the members did not understand the principles they had espoused. It was very natural that this should be so, seeing that working men were so jealous of each other. The seed then sown, however, had taken root in the country, and they were there that day as the representatives of an opinion which in its influence had been growing that length of time. They were the pioneers of one of the greatest social movements of the day. They had called the attention of the whole country to their reports, they had established their own organs, and had secured friends amongst every class of society without any exception, and if with all this support they did not further succeed the fault must remain with themselves." The honourable and singular career of the Mayor, the office he held, the words he spoke, and the changed position of the co-operators whom he addressed, made a remarkable morning in Manchester.

A letter by an "Oldham Co-operator" in the *Times* of August 21, 1875, states that "in the Oldham Industrial a large number of members' investments do not amount to £1 each, yet these are the members who spend the largest amount of money at the stores, and hence, while they receive little or no interest, they receive the largest amount of dividend—in some cases £6 or £7 per quarter; while, on the other hand, those members who have the largest investments as a rule spend the least money. Therefore, while they receive at the quarter's end something like £1 for interest, their dividends are small compared with the other members."

Failsworth is distinguished for amusing adventures in cow co-operation. But unfortunately when the cow died the society died. Failsworth has also attempted cattle farming. Of course there are always difficulties in persons having chiefly factory knowledge, succeeding in field work. Field and cattle culture imply special knowledge of outdoor and animal life. It is difficult, as has been said, for mill hands to turn to farming as it is for farm hands to turn to weaving. Unless workmen have previously had some farm experience, they do not do well at hand work. However, Mr. Joel Whitehead best supplies the facts of what befell the early co-operators of Failsworth. He informs me the co-operative feeling is not of a recent date

in that place. He has often heard his father regret that working people had not the confidence in each other which would enable them to do their own business. But there was no protection against fraud. And often has he heard the rejoinder by persons asked to subscribe to a co-operative enterprise that they durst not entrust their little property where it could be stolen with impunity.

About 1838 a number of youths, whose ages would range from thirteen to sixteen years, began to club their pence together with the object of renting a plot of land to grow potatoes upon. They intended to delve the land themselves, collect manure, buy seed, plant and reap the potatoes or whatever grew, and sell them amongst their neighbours. Of course their ideas of Co-operation were crude, but there was the germ of the principle in their minds, even at their early age. However, their means were too slender for some of them to comply with the terms of subscription of one penny per week. They got behind with their cash contributions before there was a sufficient sum to purchase seed, which damped the ardour of the others who had managed to muster their share weekly. At that time pennies were as scarce in the pockets of lads as shillings are now, consequently nothing came of their juvenile attempt.

Eight or ten years later a number of very young men directed their attention once more to co-operative effort. They subscribed in larger sums than they had been able to do before, and actually bought a cow and had it killed in a barn. They sold it out to their neighbours, but they either sold at too low a price, gave too much weight, or had too much waste. Their deficiency could not arise from excessive wages paid, because all their work was done for nothing, except a trifle to a butcher for killing. But whatever the cause, the balance was on the wrong side of their humble ledger. So down went the society. For about ten years after the collapse of cow-selling no one had the courage to make another attempt. At length a few persons attempted to establish a Farming Society. They framed a code of rules under the title of "The Self-Help Co-operative Society," and took a farm of about nine statute acres. They bought two cows, half a dozen pigs, reared several hatches of ducks, and bred a number

of rabbits. They planted potatoes, cabbages, turnips, wheat, oats, and vetches. But the work was uncouth to them. They had not the practical knowledge nor physical qualifications necessary for success. They had the misfortune to lose a cow, which proved a death-blow to their enterprise, as they never numbered more than seven members, the lowest number recognised by law, and their means were too limited to bear the strain to which this thoughtless cow subjected them. So the farming society at Failsworth died with the cow. They called it in reporting language "succumbing to force of circumstances." Another attempt has since been commenced by a number of Newton Heath and Failsworth people, to solve the problem of food production on a small scale, and if they can get cows of more consideration they expect to succeed.

A fair example of the rapidity with which little difficulties succeed each other in the establishment of a store are contained in an account sent me by Mr. John Livingston, of Macclesfield. The wife of a member was thought to be living in a degree of affluence disproportionate to her expenditure at the store. She became a subject of observation, and was found outside the store with butter which she did not pay for. She was forgiven on condition of her husband leaving the society. Then a joiner, doing a job in the shop (who was a member) mistook his instructions, and worked at the till. The police disposed of him for a month. This meant some pounds of loss to the society. Next, one of the committee men, when he had learned the profits of the trade, commenced shopkeeping on his own account. Some loaves of bread discovered to be missing from the bakery, a potato was put in another loaf for a mark. But potato and loaf were both missing. This baker being discharged, the next spoiled two or three large bakings, of which each loaf was 4lbs. They were sold at a reduced rate to the poor. The directors afterwards learned from a servant girl that she heard the baker say he was paid for spoiling the bread. A donkey and cart were set up to carry in and out the bread baked for the members. But the animal died, not for his country's good nor that of co-operation. The store stood the market with potatoes on a Saturday, and chalked on a board the words "Co-operative Potatoes." They gave checks, and it occupied half their time to explain

their use amidst the derisions of the hucksters. The store next removed to a large shop and building in the same street, which cost £1,000 to the original owner. The store has since bought it and two cottages, now a steam bakery and drapery shop. They obtained a very smart shopman from another county, and he had a shopman for his bondsman. The first lot of coffee was ordered from a Liverpool house by the shopman from its traveller. In time the directors had to take the keys from their shopman, and sell a portion of the coffee at the wholesale price to his bondsman. The Liverpool house was written to to ascertain the weight mark. The answer was, "We have made a mistake and should have allowed you 18 lbs. as the tare." The persevering fellows get along smoothly now (1877).

There was a store in another energetic manufacturing town (name lost) which was held in the market-place. It never had any other place of business than its stall there. In what way Mr. Tidd Pratt enrolled it (if it was enrolled) has not been communicated to me. Mr. Tidd Pratt, had he been a man of curious mind, with a taste for describing the humours of humble men, could have told amusing instances of the adventures of the provident poor. This market store was commenced by some young men of means too small to take a shop, but with vigour of mind and determination to do something in the way of Co-operation; so they negotiated with the market authorities for a stall, and the little enterprising committee, manager, salesman, secretary, and treasurer, or whatever officers they had, stood the market on Saturday afternoon and night—the only time when they were off work. They made more noise than profit; but some nights they cleared as much as nine shillings, when their hopes rose so high that had the Government stood in need of a loan at that time, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had certainly heard from them, to the effect that if he could wait a bit they would see what they could do for him. Their difficulty was to make the public purchasers understand all about the division of profits. Surrounding traders supplied gratuitous information to the effect that the buyers would never hear of any profits. They had no checks to give—those outward and visible signs of inward "Tin," which in other stores allay suspicions.

Indeed, these market co-operators did not themselves understand the mystery of checks. But they promised a division of profits quarterly, which they had heard was the regular thing. The dubious purchasers of cabbage and treacle went away in hope. But before long, at the end of a fortnight, a shrewd old woman, who was afraid they would forget her face, appeared to ask if they would pay her dividend on the three pennyworth of potatoes she had bought two weeks ago. No doubt the store would have answered had not the salesmen, who had been all the week in hot mills, caught cold in the damp air of winter, which ended in rheumatic fever with two of them, and the co-operative stall became vacant. A good outdoor man, who, like Sam Slick, was waterproof and lively, could have made the "Co-op. Stall," as it was called, pay.

The Newton Heath Society, which was commenced in 1840 by a few enterprising young fellows, paid their salesman fourpence in the £ upon the sales he made—a simple way of fixing a salary, and as the sales were few and far between in those days he had a motive for endeavouring to increase the purchasers. But in later years, when the sales at stores exceed £100 a day, some limit would have to be found where the fourpence should stop.

Co-operation was unknown in Halifax till the spring of 1829, when the first recorded society was formed, May 29th in that year. An old and nearly worn-out member of the *Brighton Co-operator*, and another of the *Associate*, fell into the hands of Mr. Nicholson. These he showed to his father and three brothers, which induced them, and four others, to commence a society. Their first co-operative tea-party was held in April the following year. About two hundred persons, chiefly women, were present; the "Tea Feast," as they called it, being given gratis, in order that the women might get some practical and pleasant knowledge of co-operation. In the record of the society's existence they made a levy of four shillings a member to enable them to join the Liverpool Wholesale Society. At the end of two years and a half the Halifax co-operators found that they had made a profit on their capital of £200, twenty times as much as the same money would have yielded them in a savings bank. This society published in the *Lancashire and Yorkshire Co-operator*,

the first financial table of their progress which appeared. It exhibited as follows the position of the society for the first three years :—

TABLE OF THE FIRST HALIFAX SOCIETY.

Year.	Sales.	Expenses.	Clear Profit.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
1830	2,266 5 9½	73 10 7½	67 7 8¼
1831	2,921 16 8½	123 3 8	59 13 5½
1832	3,196 2 10½	147 3 11	46 1 9½
Total	8,384 5 4¼	343 18 2½	173 2 11¼

The Halifax Society of to-day is one of the mighty stores of the time, and has a history to itself like Rochdale. If Halifax happens to lose £60,000, it still goes on its way, no more disturbed than one of the planets when an eccentric comet loses its tail.

Mr. J. C. Farn has given instructive instances of early successes of co-operative societies occurring between 1826 and 1830. A society had cleared £21 by the butchers' trade in one quarter ; a second had been able to divide profits at the rate of 30s. per member ; a third, which had commenced with 6s., had grown to £200 in eight months, £75 of which was profit ; a fourth had a capital of £207, and had cleared £32 during the quarter ; a fifth had its capital formed by payments of 6d. per week until it had reached £25, and in fifteen months it had cleared three times the amount in profit ; a sixth, with a capital of £109, had cleared £172 ; whilst a seventh could boast of 700 members, who went boldly in for manufacturing.

The story of the Burnley Society is well worth telling. It has had great vicissitudes, years elapsing without progress or gain. Save for incessant attention, ceaseless nights of labour at the books, and unwavering devotion given by Mr. Jacob Waring, the society had never stood its ground. Other members worked ; that Mr. Waring did so in the chief degree was acknowledged by the society when its day of success came by a public presentation to him. Sometimes, when the books had been worked at till late on a Saturday night and

almost into Sunday morning, the directors, when the balance came to be struck, were afraid to look at it, lest it should be against the society, as had so often happened before. For two or three years things were sytematically going to the bad. No one could discover how or why. The stock entries, as goods arrived, were made in a small book. Being small it got mislaid, or overlaid at the time when the quarterly accounts had to be made up. It was so likely an occurrence that nothing was thought of it. Everything seemed regular and yet the result was never right. At length, not from any suspicion, but because no other change could be thought of to be tried, Mr. Waring suggested that a stock book be got so large that it could not be overlooked, so bulky that it could not be hidden, and so heavy that no one could carry it away and not know it. After that quarter profits reappeared and never went out of sight any more. Amid the many-advertised qualities of good account books, I never remember to have seen size and weight put down as virtues. Yet there must be some obvious merit therein; for a bulky book saved the Burnley store. It was not want of capital, not want of trade, not want of watchful management, the protracted deficits lay in small account-books. Thin books brought small dividends; fat books produced fat profits. In Burnley success seemed related to stock-book bulk.

Human nature is porcupine in Sheffield. Suspicion is a profession, disagreement was long an art among Sheffield operatives.

Leeds used to have great talent in this way; hence it has presented an entirely different phase of Co-operation from Rochdale—different in its aims, its methods of procedure, and its results. When Leeds men made profits they would spend them instead of saving them. A noble mill and grounds were to be sold. A year's profits would have bought the property and made a mighty store. Years after they had to give more for the ground alone than they could have had both land and building. Leeds has been remarkable for possessing two friends of the industrial classes, knowing them thoroughly, sympathising with them thoroughly, mixing with them, taking a personal part in all their industrial efforts, and accustomed to write and speak, and capable in both respects.

No town ever had two better industrial and co-operative expositors than John Holmes and James Hole. Mr. Holmes's economic advantages of Co-operation in reply to Mr. Snodgrass is a notable example of practical controversy, fair, circumstantial, and cogent. A gentleman whom nobody supposed existed save in the "Pickwick Papers," one John Snodgrass, a practical miller, was proprietor of the Dundas Grain Mills, Glasgow. He wrote against the Leeds Corn Mill. It was in defence of the mill that Mr. Holmes wrote in reply. The men of Leeds showed true co-operative honesty in their corn mill affair. When they made no profit they were advised to grind a cheap kind of Egyptian corn instead of more costly English or good foreign wheat. The Leeds co-operators would not use Egyptian corn on principle. Hard, suspicious, jealous, discordant, and greedy as many of them then were, they would not use it. They could make thousands by doing it, and yet they did not do it. They loved money, yet would not make it in a deceptive way. Mr. Gladstone showed in his great speech at the inauguration of the Wedgwood Memorial that beauty paid — that Wedgwood had found it so. Manufacturers may be expected to study beauty when it pays. The Leed co-operators honourably stuck to purity when it did not pay.

In the winter of 1847 David Green, of Leeds, John Brownless, and others, began to meet in a room in Holbeck, used as a school and meeting-house by the Unitarians. Mr. Mill, afterwards known in London as Dr. John Mill, acted as minister. At times Mr. Charles Wickstead officiated. In that room the project of the Leeds Co-operative Corn Mill originated. The Leeds Co-operative Society furnished materials for as curious a history as any store in the kingdom.[1] Though its profits in 1905 exceed all other stores, there was a time when it lost upon everything it undertook to deal in; never were there such unfortunate co-operators. They lost on the flour mill; they lost on the drapery—they lost always on that; they lost on the meat department—they never could get an honest manager there; they lost on the tailoring; they lost on the groceries; they lost on boots and

[1] This may be seen in the "Jubilee History of the Leeds Society," 1897, by the present writer.

shoes; and they lost their money which they did take, for that used to disappear mysteriously. When Mr. John Holmes used to predict that they would surely make 5 per cent. profit, and eventually make more; that he should live to see the day when they would make £10,000 a year—the quarterly meeting, which had been looking long for dividends and seen them not, laughed at his speeches, would whistle as he spoke, and tap their foreheads to indicate there was something wrong there in the speaker, and exclaim, "Holmes has a slate off, and a very large one too! Holmes is up in the clouds again, and will never come down!" Mr. Holmes came to enjoy high repute as a true prophet.

One day he met a woman whom he had long known as a steady frequenter of the store, who gave him brief, indistinct answers to his friendly greetings, nothing like her accustomed vivaciousness of speech; and he said to her, "What's the matter? Have you the faceache?" With some confusion she at length said, "She had been having some decayed teeth taken out. Her husband had found that he had a good accumulation of dividends at the store, and said she should have a new set of teeth and look as well as a lady, and they had not come home yet." Mr. Holmes very properly complimented her husband on so honourable a proof of regard for his wife and pride in her good looks, and went away amused at this unexpected use of dividends which had never occurred to him.[1]

Of the interest which co-operators take in their property when they eventally get it, Mr. Holmes gives me this instance. Once when their mill was burnt down and they had some horses in the stable, hundreds of members ran from every part of the town and rushed into the stables, and, despite the fire, got the horses out safely. Had the horses been owned by some alien-minded proprietor, all the horses would have been lost.

For years the society had no educational fund. It made occasional grants to enable lectures to be delivered at the chief stores in their district—Holbeck, Hunslet, Woodhouse Moor, and other places. When I have had the honour to be one of

[1] Mr. Clay, of Gloucester, used to relate that a co-operative boy being told that a new brother had come into the house, and asking who brought it, was told the doctor, answered, "Why did not mother get it through the store, then she would have had a dividend upon it."

the lecturers I have argued for knowledge on commercial grounds, and taken for my subject, "Intelligence Considered as an Investment." The members whom it was most desirable to influence did not, as a rule, attend, not having knowledge enough to know that knowledge has value. Wise directors, who proposed an Educational Fund, found it opposed by the general meetings lest it should diminish the dividends. Mr. Holmes has likened making the proposal to walking in a garden immediately after rain. The paths, as any one knows, which were perfectly clear before, are suddenly covered with crawling creatures. They spring up out of the earth so rapidly that you can scarcely place your foot without treading upon the slimy things. In the same manner, when a proposal for Education Funds is made to an uninformed meeting, the worms of ignorance crawl forth on every path where their existence was not suspected; elongated and—in the case of human worms—vociferous cupidity carries the day against them.

Bradford, not far from Leeds, is another of the likely towns in which it might be supposed that Co-operation would flourish. Yet it did not soon attain distinction there. Its artisan population, energetic, conspiring, and resolute, suffered as much as the workpeople of any town. Chartism could always count on a fighting corps of weavers in Bradford. It has also had some stout co-operators, and in earlier days there was a branch of communists there who held a hall.

Liverpool has known co-operative initiation. Mr. John Finch, dating from 34, East Side of Salt House Dock, Liverpool (date about 1830), appeared as the treasurer and trustee of the first Liverpool Co-operative Society, and of the wholesale purchasing committee of that society. He reported that the "First Christian Society" in Liverpool has 140 members, the business at the store being £60 per week, and that a second Christian Society had 40 members. He mentioned the existence of five societies in Carlisle, and gave the names of five presidents, five secretaries, and five treasurers. The highest capital possessed by one of these societies was £260, the weekly receipts £50. He says, the "*Weekly Free Press* takes Co-operation up too coldly and is too much of a Radical to do the cause any good." Yet as the most important advocates of Co-operation

wrote in it, and the chief Metropolitan social proceedings were printed in it; as this was the only newspaper representing Co-operation, a public advocate of the cause should have held his disparaging tongue until there was a choice. The *Weekly Free Press* was a London newspaper, of 1830, which announced that it was "exclusively devoted to the interests of Co-operation." The Godalming Co-operative Society had passed a resolution "that every member who takes in a weekly paper shall substitute the *Weekly Free Press* in its stead." This society had very decided ideas how to get an organ of the movement into circulation. The *Weekly Free Press* was the earliest newspaper of repute which represented Co-operation.

The first Liverpool Society of 1830 was the earliest which prefixed an address to its rules. It was not very well written, but the example was a good one. It gave the opportunity of interesting those into whose hands the rules fell.

The Warrington Society of 1831 prefixed to its articles an excellent sentence from Isaiah, namely, "They helped every one his neighbour, and every one said to his brother, Be of good courage." The rules of this society are remarkable, like all the rules of the co-operative societies of that time, for their anxiety concerning the moral character of their members. They prohibited indecent and improper language in the committee-room; they would hold no meeting in a public-house; no person was refused on account of religious opinions; no person of an immoral character was admitted; and, if any member became notably vicious after he was a member, he was expelled unless he reformed. They fixed the interest on money borrowed at 5 per cent.—the earliest instance of that amount being named in official rules. One of their rules was that "when sufficient money was in their hands some kind of manufacture should be commenced." They refused, "as a body, to be connected with any political body whatever, or with any unions for strikes against masters." The society was pledged to "steadily pursue its own objects." Had it done so they would have been going on now. They, however, did think of progress. This Warrington Society agreed to form a library, to take in a newspaper, and to publish tracts on Co-operation—not common with many modern societies.

The Runcorn Economical Society of 1831 took for its motto the brief and striking passage, "Sirs, ye are brethren." But they did not apply the spirit of this to women, for they allowed no female to serve in any office. Neither did they permit any member to make known to any person who was not a member the profits arising from the society's store; a great contrast to the more profitable publicity of later societies. No doubt the Runcorners made good profits. No society ever forbids disclosures unless it has something to its own advantage to conceal. This society was creditably fastidious as to its members. It would have none but those of good character, who were sober, industrious, and of general good health. They did not wish sickly colleagues, nor would they admit a member under sixteen, nor above forty years of age—as though frugality was a virtue unsuitable to the young, or not necessary for the old.

In the rules of the first Preston Society, instituted on Whit-Monday, 1834 (I quote from the copy which belonged to Mr. John Finch, then of Cook Street, Liverpool), there was one against speaking disrespectfully of the goods of the society. It declared that "if any member did so, he should be excluded, and his share should be under a forfeit of six months' profit, together with a discount of 10 per cent. for the benefit of the establishment. The directors of many other societies would have more peace of mind if they could get passed rules of this description. This society accepted no member who belonged to another co-operative society, nor, if he had formerly belonged to one, unless he produced testimonials as to his character and the cause of his leaving. Any market man neglecting to attend when sent for, or not attending on market days at proper time, was fined a sum equal to that paid for another member's attendance. No money was paid to the wife of any member, unless her husband agreed to her receiving it. The Rochdale Society never put any of this nonsense into its rules, but paid the woman member, and left the husband to his remedy, which wise magistrates made it difficult for him to get.

The rules of the earlier co-operative societies form an interesting subject of study. Some of the societies seem to have expected rapscallion associates, for they had rules for the

treatment of felons who might be discovered among them. But as a whole, a study of the rules would greatly exalt the political estimate of the capacity of the working class for self-government. The wisdom, the prudence, the patient devices, which co-operative rules display, must be quite unknown, or we should never have heard the foolish and wholesale disparagements of working people which have defaced discussion in Parliament.

America is not only a country where social ideas have room for expansion, but also seems a place where the art of writing about them improves. Certainly emigrants there will relate what they never tell at home. The Countess Ossoli used to value the "rough pieces of personal experience" (always fresh and excellent packages of knowledge when you can get them) which backwoodsmen would tell by their night fires. At home persons imagine home facts can have no interest, or conclude that they are well known. Few writers know everything, and it is well for the reader if an historian has but a limited belief in his own knowledge, and is minded to inquire widely of others. Under this impression I became possessed of the following curious history of the early adventures of a Lancashire store (England) related to me by a Lowell correspondent, whose name (the printer not returning me the letter) I regret not being able to give.

"The Blackley (Lancashire) Store commenced in the fall of 1860 with some forty members. We lost no time in renting premises and commencing business. The first year I acted as secretary, and then resigned my office to abler hands, which still retain it. I was, however, elected a director, and served in the various offices of Committeeman, President, Auditor, and Librarian, six years more. During the first year we acted on the plan of giving the storekeeper a dividend on his wages, equal to that paid to members on their purchases. We may, therefore, claim to be the first, or about the first, society in England to adopt the device. It was discontinued for a time —it has, however, been readopted. Our first president, who was an overseer in one of the mills in the village, was addicted to thinking that respectability was a good thing for us, and thought us fortunate when the *élite* of the village smiled on us. It was a great day for him when at one of our meetings we

had a real live mayor to preside, supported by the chairman of the Chamber of Commerce, a canon of the Church, the village rector and other dignitaries. But it did us little good.[1] When the show was over there was an end of them, because they did not really care for us. But one gentleman, the Rev. Mr. Child, rector of a neighbouring parish, did take a kindly interest in us, and was always ready to help us when need came, and our members became much attached to him. At the end of the first year we set about building a store of our own, and our president designed that the laying of the corner-stone should be a grand affair. A silver trowel was to be presented to some one. Every one of us turned to our friend, the Rev. Mr. Child, whom we wished should possess it. Alas! our ceremoniously-minded president suggested it would not be courteous to our rector, the Rev. Mr. Deeling, to ignore him and offer it to another, though he had shown us little favour, and was under the influence of the shopocracy. At length we agreed to offer the silver trowel to the rector, in the hope that he would refuse it, and we should be free to confer it on our friend Mr. Child. Woe on us! Rector Deeling accepted it! He came and did the work, made us a short speech, took the trowel, and ever after shunned us. During the cotton famine many of our members suffered severely, but it was an inexorable condition with the committee of relief which came into being in our quarter, that no member of the store could receive anything from them so long as he had a shilling invested; and I shall long remember seeing the poor fellows coming week after week for a few shillings out of their savings, until it was all gone, whilst their neighbours, who had as good an opportunity but saved nothing, were being well cared for. I have often felt a wonder, on looking back to that dreadful time, how we got through it without coming to grief. A young society, with small capital, and putting up a building that cost £1,000, yet we stood well upright. I am certain if we had foreseen the events of the four years that were then before us, we should certainly have shrunk from encountering them. Nevertheless, we weathered the storms,

[1] But in many places and at many times it does do good, when persons of local or national distinction take part in co-operative proceedings. It testifies that the cause commands the interest of those who influence affairs.

and came out prosperous. I can only account for our success by the inherent soundness of the co-operative principle, and its self-sustaining power. It was certainly not owing to any particular ability or foresight in the men who had the conduct of it. I have no further facts from this American side of the water for you, and you do not ask for opinions, yet I cannot help giving some. The people of America, I think, are not ripe for co-operation—they have not been *pinched* enough, and the opportunities for individual enterprise are too good. They cannot understand anything but a speculation to make money, and the general moral scepticism is such that any one promoting a store would be suspected of wanting to make something out of it."

The story of the silver trowel is as pretty an episode as any to be met with in the history of co-operative adventures. The rector who took it did quite right, and the silly co-operators who offered it deserved to lose it. How was he to know that they did not intend to honour him when they pretended they did? The president who plotted the presentation was evidently a man well up in his line of business. It is a sacred rule or English public life never to bring to the front actual workers of mark, lest you should deter people from coming to the front who always hold back. If any honour is to be shown, the rule is to pass by all who have earned it, and bestow it upon some one never known to do anything. The Blackley co-operators are to be congratulated. They lost their trowel on sound conventional principles. But if they had no money left to make an equal honorary present to their real friend, the Rev. Mr. Child, they ought to have stood in the market-place on Saturday nights and begged, like Homer, with their hats, until they had enough money for the purpose.

In Radnorshire there is a parish of the name of Evenjobb—pleasant to a workman's ears. Pleasanter than Mealsgate or Boggrow, or other extraordinarily-named places which abound in Cumberland, is the wide, watery plain of Blennerhasset, with its little bridge and quaint houses. Here in this seldom-mentioned spot, is a very old-endowed Presbyterian meeting-house, where heretics of that order once had a secure refuge to themselves. The co-operative store there is a very primitive one; none like it exists elsewhere in England. The members

subscribe no capital and take no shares. Mr. William Lawson provided the whole. They have all the profits and he has all the risk and no interest, or if any accrues to him he spends it for the "public good." He has since wisely placed at the service of the members the opportunity of purchasing the shares for themselves, and remodelling the store on the plan of those which are self-directed and managed by members, who take interest because they take the risks.

There are stores of the self-helping type now established in the neighbourhood of Blennerhasset. I delivered in 1874 the opening addresses of the Aspatria Society's Store in Noble Temple, and a well-built, substantial, well-arranged store it is. From the name Noble Temple, the stranger would expect that it was some stupendous structure of unwonted beauty, or that some architect, amazed at the felicity of his conception, had given it that exalted name; whereas the ground on which it stands happened to be named "Noble," and the very flat and ordinary fields around are called "Noble Fields." Mr. W. Lawson built the hall for the people and considerately stipulated that it should be used on Sundays for useful addresses.

There are many of the Scotch societies remarkable for singular features. There was the Kilmarnock Store, which kept two cats—a black cat and a tabby cat—to catch the mice of the store. But a prudent member, thinking this double feline expenditure told unfavourably on the dividends, attention was duly called to it. At a Board meeting the question was argued all one night. There was a black cat party and a tabby cat party. It was agreed on both sides that the two could not be kept; and a strong partisan of the tabby cat moved the adjournment of the debate. In the meantime the black cat, either through hearing the discussion, or finding a deficiency of milk, or more probably being carried off by the kind-hearted wife of some member—disappeared; and the division was never taken; and the secretary, who was instructed to ascertain what effect its support would have upon the dividends, never concluded his calculations.

Mauchline, which Burns knew so well, never took to co-operation until the agitation for the People's Charter set men thinking of self-help. The committee began with giving

credit to the extent of two-thirds of the subscribed capital of each member. At a later stage in their career they extended the credit to the whole of the subscribed capital. The store must have been the most rickety thing out. Mr. Hugh Gibb, who was its president, and who understood co-operation, resisted this discreditable policy with an honourable persistence which rendered him unpopular. He constantly described credit as a foul blot upon co-operation, since it tended to keep the members in a state of dependence from which co-operation was intended to deliver them. By this time the store has got off the siding of credit, and is fairly upon the main line of cash payments.

The purchase of the Mechanics' Institution at Blaydon—Joseph Cowen, junr., was the founder—by the co-operative store is an instance of public spirit more remarkable than that displayed by any other society. This Mechanics' Institution has fulfilled in its day more of the functions which Mechanics' Institutions were intended for, than have been fulfilled elsewhere. Political, social, and theological lectures could be delivered from its platform. Its news-room was open on the Sunday, when it could be of most service to the working class. Eminent public men were honorary members of it; Garibaldi, Orsini, Kossuth, Mazzini were the chief names. The first honorary distinction conferred upon me, and one I value, was that of placing my name on that roll. On the Co-operative Store annexing it to their Society, they still kept the platform free and the news-room open on Sunday. The Institution is well supplied with books and the best newspapers of the day, accessible to all the members of the store free, and to the villagers not belonging to the stores on payment of a small fee. In addition to a free library, well supplied with desirable books, the social features of a working-man's club are added. This liberal provision for the education and social pleasures of the co-operators illustrates the high spirit in which the best stores have been conceived and conducted.

Co-operators have received distinguished encouragement to devote part of their funds to educational purposes whenever they have made known that they were endeavouring to form a library. The Sunderland Society, in 1863, received gifts of books from Mr. Tennyson, Mr. Mill, Lord Brougham,

and Mazzini in 1864. Later, in 1877, Professor Tyndall gave a complete set of his works to be presented to such Co-operative Society as I might select. They were awarded to the Blaydon-on-Tyne Society. Blaydon-on-Tyne is merely a small village, through which the river and the railway run, and distinguished as the birthplace and residence of Mr. Joseph Cowen, M.P. The houses are encompassed by grim manufacturing works, yet Blaydon has the most remarkable store next to that of Rochdale. It began to grow, and went straight on growing. Its book-keeping is considered quite a model of method. The store has grown from a house to a street. The library contains upwards of 1,500 volumes of new books. Of course they have an Education Fund of 2½ per cent. net profits, reserved for instruction. No co-operative society has outside respect which has not this feature.

The store assets increased by upwards of £500 during 1876, notwithstanding that there had been £20,119 in shares and profit withdrawn. After discharging horse and cart and all other accounts, there was paid in dividends £13,003. Mr. Spotswood informs me that their Education Fund was then close upon £400 a year, and that they were busy fitting up three branches with news-rooms and libraries.[1] There is a good science class in Blaydon, and most of the students are the sons of members. The pitmen and artisans of the Tyneside are distinguished among workmen for their love of mathematical science, and Professor Tyndall's gift will be read, and studied, and valued there.

[1] The Accrington and Church Society is hardly less remarkable for the amplitude of its educational devices. It has never been explained to strangers whether the Accrington Society is a Church store, or whether the Church owns the store at Accrington. The reader, however, is to understand that Accrington and Church are two adjacent places, used to designate the distinguished store in that neighbourhood.

CHAPTER XXXIV

VICISSITUDES OF INDUSTRIAL LITERATURE.

"'Tis not the wholesome sharp morality,
Or modest anger of a satiric spirit,
That hurts or wounds the body of a state,
But the sinister application
Of the . . . ignorant . . .
Interpreter who will distort and strain
The general scope and purpose of an author."
DR. JOHNSON, Poetaster.

CO-OPERATIVE literature has a distinctively English character. It is enthusiastic and considerate, advising gain only by equitable means. If it dreams, it dreams constantly how men can best take the next step before them. Nevertheless it would be the better in some respects for an infusion of Continental and American ideas into it. There are what naturalists would call "specific growths" of associative conceptions in other countries, richer and loftier than ours, and they would be valuable additions to the bleak and hardier products of Great Britain. The co-operative idea in its "germ state" has always been in the mind of man in all countries though in very atomic form. The power and advantage of mere unity were themes of the ancient fabulists, and philosophers speculated how unity in life might produce moral as well as physical advantages. Ancient India, as we now know, was rich in pacific thought which gave rise to pastoral communities. Comparative co-operation would be as interesting in social science as comparative language or comparative anatomy has been in philology and osteology.

The co-operative custom of Greek fishermen, of Cornish and Northumberland miners, of Gruyère cheesemakers, of

American and Chinese sailors; the devices of partnership of Ambelaika, show that for some two centuries constructive co-operation has been in action without being extended to other places or trades.

In other countries men of the "wilder sort" are wilder than in England, and have sometimes made communistic co-operation hostile and alarming.

One reason why the American nation is smarter than the English is, that the State has a Propagandist Department, and publishes costly books for the information of their people. To them England must seem parsimonious, seeing that we have growls in Parliament at the expense of printing the dreary-looking Blue Books we produce. There come over here from America, every year, volumes teeming with maps and diagrams of every kind, issued by the State Board of Health and the Bureau of Labour of Washington and Massachusetts. But we have no Bureau of Labour, though we owe everything to our being a manufacturing country.[1] No minister has ever thought of creating a State Department of Labour. It is with difficulty that we get, every three years, a few sheets printed of the Reports of Friendly and Co-operative Societies. Deputations of members of Parliament had to be appointed to wait on the Printing Committee to get this done; and it is believed the Committee took medical advice before meeting the deputation, as no one can foresee what the effects might be. For several years we had debates at our Annual Congress as to how the House of Commons might be approached with this momentous application. Yet it was not a question of loss. It is economy to give the information. In America it is given by the State to every society or manufacturer of mark likely to profit by it. The American reports mentioned, some years exceed 600 pages, handsomely bound and lettered, suitable for a gentleman's library. A considerable number of these volumes are sent to England, to societies and individuals publicly known to be interested in the questions to which they relate.

There is one instance in which the English Government,

[1] Since this was written the Board of Trade have issued monthly a *Labour Gazette*; its monthly appearance renders it especially useful.

it must be owned, has done more than any other government, in publishing Blue Books upon the condition of the Industrial Classes Abroad, written by Her Majesty's Secretaries of Embassy and Legation which were issued for three years under the direction of Lord Clarendon. The reports gave information as to the state of labour markets in foreign countries, the purchasing power of the wages paid compared with what the same money would procure at home; the manner in which workmen were hired and housed; the quality of the work executed; the kind of education to be had for families of workmen; the conditions of health in the quarters workmen would occupy, and other information of the utmost value to emigrant artisans and labourers.[1]

So long as social ideas on the continent are sensible, we seldom hear of them in our journals or from the lips of our politicians, even though the social movement may be extensive and creditable. But if an idiot or an enemy makes a speech to some obscure club it is printed in small capitals, as though the end of the world had been suddenly disclosed.

The *Standard* is a curious and mysterious source of this information. Though Conservative, it was long the only penny daily paper in which the working-class democrat found a full account of the proceedings in Parliament, so essential to their information. Besides, it gives copious accounts of the revolutionary leaders, their movements and speeches abroad. If Castelar, Gambetta, Victor Hugo, or Bakunin have made speeches of mark, or of alarming import, insurgent readers in England could find the most complete and important passages in the columns of the *Standard* alone. Possibly its idea is that these reports would excite the apprehensions of Conservative supporters, and terrify the immobile and comfortable portion of the middle class. In 1871, when the Industrial International Association met at Geneva, this journal told us that the internationalists raised the "Swiss flag without the cross, democracy without religion," and the Red Republic, and a good deal more. The late Mr. George Odger was at the Congress. At that time, the Emperor Napoleon being uncomfortable about the proceedings of

[1] These Books were issued on my suggestion, which was conveyed to Lord Clarendon by Mr. Bright.

Garibaldi, whom the association wished to invite to their Congress, M. Boitelle had the foreign members arrested as they passed through France, and their papers seized. Two of the members, Mr. George Odger and Mr. Cremer, "being of English birth," the *Standard* said "English like, they made an awful row about this insult to their country and their flag." Lord Cowley took the matter up; the men were soon at liberty, but their papers were detained by the police, and months elapsed before the delegates received them back. Napoleon wished to please Lord Cowley and to win the working men of Paris, so M. Rouher yielded up the documents to Odger, and "requested Bourdon, as the man whose signature stood first on the Paris memoir, to honour him with a call at the Ministry of the Interior."

The *Standard* of October, 1871, gave particulars of the trial of Netschaiew, and quoted a document produced on that occasion, purporting to detail the duties of the real Revolutionists being the profession of faith of the Russian Nihilists—presenting it as "the *ne plus ultra* of Socialism." A more scoundrelly document was never printed. The conciseness and precision of its language prove it to be the work of a very accomplished adversary. The creed contained eleven articles; but the quotation of six of them will abundantly satisfy the curiosity of the reader. They treated of the "position of a revolutionist towards himself."

"1. The revolutionist is a condemned man. He can have neither interest, nor business, nor sentiment, nor attachment, nor property, nor even a name. Everything is absorbed in one exclusive object, one sole idea, one sole passion—revolution.

"2. He has torn asunder every bond of order, with the entire civilised world, with all laws, with all rules of propriety, with all the conventions, all the morals of this world. He is a pitiless enemy to the world, and, if he continue to live in it, it can only be with the object of destroying it the more surely.

"3. The revolutionist despises all doctrines and renounces all worldly science, which he abandons to future generations. He recognises only one science—that of destruction. For that, and that alone, he studies mechanics, physics, chemistry

—even medicines. He studies night and day the living science of men, of characters, and all the circumstances and conditions of actual society in every possible sphere. The only object to be attained is the destruction, by the promptest means possible, of this infamous society.

"4. He despises public opinion; and detests the existing state of public morals in all its phases. The only morality he can recognise is that which lends its aid to the triumph of revolution; and everything which is an obstacle to the attainment of this end is immoral and criminal.

"5. The revolutionist is without pity for the State and all the most intelligent classes of society. Between himself and them there is continued implacable war. He ought to learn to suffer tortures.

"6. Every tender and effeminate sentiment towards relations—every feeling of friendship, of love, of gratitude, and even of honour—ought to be dominated by the cold passion of revolution alone. There can be, for him, but one consolation, one recompense, and one satisfaction—the success of revolution. Day and night he should have only one thought, one object in view—destruction without pity. Marching coldly and indefatigably towards his end, he ought to be ready to sacrifice his own life, and to take, with his own hands, the lives of all those who attempt to impede the realisation of this object."

Society is very safe if its destruction is only to be accomplished by agents of this quality. No country could hope to produce more than one madman in a century, capable of devotion to this cheerless, unrequiting, and self-murdering creed. What there would remain to revolutionise when everything is destroyed, only a lunatic could discover. Poor Socialism, whose disease is too much trust in humanity, whose ambition is labour, and whose passion is to share the fruits with others, has met with critics insane enough to believe that Netschaiew was its exponent.

So late as when the Commune was a source of political trouble in Paris, the advocates of the Commune were called "Communists," and the ignorance of the English press was so great, that these agitators were always represented as partisans of a social theory of community of property.

Whereas, in that sense, none of the leaders of the Commune were communists. The Commune meant the parish, and the same party in England—had it arisen in England—would have been called Parochialists. The advocacy of the Commune is the most wholesome and English agitation that ever took place in France. It arose in a desire of the French to adopt our local system of self-government. It was the greatest compliment they ever paid us. And the English press repaid it by representing them as spoliators, utopianists, and organised madmen. During the invasion of the Germans the French found that centralisation had ruined the nation. The mayors of all towns being appointed by the Government, when the Government fell, all local authorities fell, and the Germans overran the helpless towns. Had the Germans invaded England, every town would have raised a regiment by local authority, and every county would have furnished an army. Every inch of ground would have been contested by a locally organised force. It was this the Communists of France wished to imitate. The claim for local self-government was made chiefly in Paris, and for Paris alone—there being probably no chance of sustaining a larger claim : but as far as it went the claim was wholesome. The French have been so long accustomed to centralisation that their statesmen are incapable of conceiving how local self-government can co-exist with a state of general government. In England we have some 20,000 parishes. If we had centralisation instead, and any public man proposed that 20,000 small governments should be set up within the central government, he would seem a madman to us. But we know from experience that local self-government is the strength and sanity of this nation. The first time the French imitated this sanity, our press, with almost one accord, called them madmen. William de Fonvielle—whose brother, Count de Fonvielle, was shot at by one of the Bonapartes—exerted himself, in the French press, to procure for the Communists the name of Communardists, to prevent the English press making the mistake about them which wrought so much mischief on public opinion here. I assisted him where I could, but we had small success then.

The pretty name of Socialism had got a few dashes of

eccentric colour laid upon it by some wayward artists in advocacy, which casual observers—who had only a superficial acquaintance with it, and no sympathy for it which might lead them to make inquiries—mistook for the original hue, and did not know that the alien streaks would all be washed off in the first genial shower of success. Earl Russell pointed out, some years ago, that if the Reformation was to be judged by the language and vagaries of Luther, Knox, and other wild-speaking Protestants, it would not have a respectable adherent among us.

The English theory of "communism," if such a word can be employed here, may be summed up in two things: 1. The hire of capital by labour, and industry taking the profit. 2. All taxes being merged in a single tax on capital, which Sir Robert Peel began when he devised the income-tax. Labour and capital would then subscribe equitably to the expenses of the State, each according to its gains or possessions.

Workmen are not the only men with a craze in advocacy. No sooner does a difficulty occur in America as to the rate of railway wages, than sober journalists screech upon the prevalence of "Socialistic" ideas and put wild notions into the heads of the men. The ancient conflict between worker and employer always seems new to journalists. The mechanic calls his master a "capitalist," and the journalist calls the workman a "communist." The same kind of thing no doubt went on at the building of the Tower of Babel, and the confusion of tongues—which Moses, unaware of the facts, otherwise accounted for—was most likely brought about by journalists.

Among all the people of America, no one ever heard of a conspiring or fighting communist. The people who form communities in America are pacific to feebleness, and criminally apathetic in regard to politics. The communistic Germans there are peaceable, domestic, and dreaming. The followers of Lasalle, if they had all emigrated to America, would be insufficient to influence any State Legislature to establish Credit Banks. The railway men do not want Credit Banks. The Irish never understood Socialism, nor cared for it. The mass of working men of America do not even understand Co-operation. The Russians have some notions

of Socialism; but Russians are very few in America, and Hertzen and Bakunin are dead. The French are not Socialists, and would be perfectly content as they are, were it not for the "Saviours of Society," the most dangerous class in every community. The term "communism" is a mere expletive of modern journalism, and is a form of swearing supposed in some quarters to be acceptable to middle-class shareholders.

In the time of the first Reform Bill, many of the active co-operators in London were also politicians, and some of them listened to proposals of carrying the Reform Bill by force of arms. This was the only time that social reformers were even indirectly mixed up with projects for violently changing the order of things. But it is to be observed that their object was not to carry their social views into operation by these means, but to secure some larger measure of political liberty. The conspiracy, such as it was—if conspiracy it can be called—was on behalf of political and not of social measures. The fact is, at that time, the action in which they took interest was less of the nature of conspiracy than of excitement, impulse, and indignation at the existence of the political state of things which seemed hopeless of improvement by reason. Indeed, the middle class shared the same excitement, and were equally as forward in proposing violent proceedings[1] as the working class. It is worthy to be particularised that the best known practical instigator of military action was a foreigner—one Colonel Macerone. If the reader will turn to the pamphlets which the Colonel published he will find that the kind of men Macerone sought to call to arms were far from being dissolute, sensual, or ambitious of their own comfort. The men who were to march on the Government were to be allowed but a few pence a day for their subsistence, and the Colonel pointed out the chief kind of food they were to carry with them, a very moderate portion of which they were to eat. Water or milk was to be their only beverage. A more humble or abstemious band of warriors were never brought into the

[1] It was Mr. Schofield, a banker, whose son was subsequently member for Birmingham, whose threat to march upon London the Duke of Wellington brought before the House of Lords. This was middle-class, not working-class intimidation.

field than those whom Colonel Macerone sought to assemble.

About 1830 a penny pamphlet was published by C. Bennett, of 37, Holywell Street, entitled "Edmund's Citizen Soldier." The first portion was "That true citizen-soldier, Colonel Macerone, remarks that the population of most countries are much better acquainted with the use of arms and with the practice of military movements than the English citizens are. Every man, and almost every boy in America possesses the unerring rifle. In France, one man in every ten has seen military service. England, however, is the great workshop for arms for all the world, and the fault is our own if we learn not the use of the things we make. The pike, made of the best ash, is sold by Macerone, at 8, Upper George Street, Bryanstone Square, at 10s. The short bayonet will not protect a man from severe cuts from the long sword of a bold horse-soldier. The long pike will. A walking soldier runs tenfold more danger in flying from a horse-soldier, than in showing a determined neck-or-nothing front to the mounted horseman."

Of course, had revolvers been then a military arm, the half-famished pike-men had had a poor chance against the well-fed mounted horsemen. But the yeoman cavalry of that day were far from being unapproachable. My old friend James Watson, mentioned as one of the earliest co-operative missionaries on record, possessed one of the "Colonel Macerones," as these pikes were called. When I came into possession of his publishing house in Queen's Head Passage, London, I found one which had long been stored there. It is still in my possession. In 1848, when the famous 10th of April came, and the Duke of Wellington fortified the Bank of England because the poor Chartists took the field under Feargus O'Connor—and a million special constables were sworn in, and Louis Napoleon, then resident in London, was reported one of them—this solitary pike was the only weapon in the metropolis with which the "Saviours of Society" could be opposed. The Duke of Wellington could have no idea of the risks he ran. It still stands at the door of my chambers, and I have shown it to Cabinet Ministers when opportunity has offered, that they

might understand what steps it might be necessary to take, in case the entire Socialistic arsenal in England (preserved in my room) should be brought to bear upon the Government in favour of Co-operation.[1]

Joseph Smith, the "sheep-maker" (who would not allow an audience to depart until they had subscribed for a sheep for the Queenwood community), mentioned previously, returned to England in 1873, and after thirty years' absence, unchanged in appearance, in voice, or fervour, addressed a new generation of co-operators. He returned to Wissahickon, Manayunkway, Philadelphia, where he keeps the "Maple Spring" Hotel, where he has the most grotesque collection of nature and art ever seen since Noah's Ark was stocked. As I have said, he certainly had as much "grit" in him as any Yankee. There is no doubt that he began business on his own account at seven years of age in some precocious way. There is no danger to him now, in saying that his first appearance in politics was knocking an officer off his horse by a brick-bat at Peterloo in 1819, excited by the way the people were wantonly slashed by ruffians of "order." He was the only one of the Blanketeers I have known. The Blanketeers were a band of distressed weavers, who set out from Manchester in 1827 to walk to London, to present a remonstrance to George the Third. They were called "Blanketeers" because they each carried a blanket to wrap himself in by the wayside at night, and a pair of stockings to replace those worn out in the journey. Each poor fellow carried in his hand his "Remonstrance" without money or food, trusting to the charity of patriots of his own class for bread on his march. Thus these melancholy insurgents, armed only with a bit of paper to present to as hopeless a king as ever reigned, set out on their march to London. The military were set upon this miserable band, and Joseph Smith was one of those who were stopped and turned back at Stockport. He claims to have devised the first social tea-party at the Manchester Co-operative Society on December 24, 1829—a much more cheerful and hopeful undertaking than Blanketeering.

[1] The danger is more serious now since the "Macerone" was supplemented, in 1876, by the sword of John Frost.

In November, 1847, we had a German Communist Conference in London, at which Dr. Karl Marx presided, who always presented with great ability the principles of Co-operation with a pernicious State point sticking through them. He said in a manifesto which he produced, that the aim of the communists was the overthrow of the rule of the capitalists by the acquisition of political power. The aim of the English communists has always been to become capitalists themselves, to supersede the rule of the capitalists by taking the "rule" of it, into their own hands for their mutual advantage. A congress of the same school was held at Geneva in 1867. Contempt was expressed for the dwarfish forms of redress which the slave of wages could effect by the co-operative system. "They could never transform capitalistic society. That can never be done save by the transfer of the organised forces of society." This was no congress of co-operators, but of mere politicians with an eye to State action. Of the sixty delegates present only seven were English, and this was not their doctrine.

Of later literature, including chiefly publications, explanatory and defensive of Co-operation, appearing since 1841, may be named the *Oracle of Reason*, the *Movement*, the *Reasoner*, the *People's Review*, the *Cause of the People*, the *Counsellor*, the *English Leader*, the *Secular World*, the *Social Economist*, and the *Secular Review*. These journals, extending from 1841 to 1877, were edited chiefly by myself, sometimes jointly with others. They are named here because they took up the story of Co-operation where the *New Moral World* left it, and continued it when there was no other representation of it in the press. Every prospectus of these papers dealt with the subject, and the pages of each journal were more or less conspicuously occupied by it.

The *Oracle of Reason* was commenced by Charles Southwell, whose name appeared as editor until his imprisonment, in Bristol, when I took his place until the same misadventure occurred to me at Gloucester, being at the time on my way to Bristol to visit him in gaol there. When the two volumes of the *Oracle* ended, Maltus Questell Ryall and myself commenced the *Movement*. The *Oracle* and the *Movement* contained "Letters to the Socialists of England,"

and the *Movement* ended with the "Visit to Harmony Hall," giving an account of the earlier and final state of the Queenwood Community.

In 1845, I published a little book entitled "Rationalism," which was then the legal name of Co-operation; the societies then known to the public being enrolled under an Act of Parliament as associations of "Rational Religionists." The only reason for mentioning the book is, that the reader who may chance to look into it will see that the conception of the co-operative movement, the criticism and defence of its principles and policy pervading this history, were indicated there. The *Cause of the People* was edited by W. J. Linton and myself, Mr. Linton well known to young politicians of that day as the editor of the *National*, and to artists as the chief of wood engravers, and since as an advocate of the political and associative views of Joseph Mazzini. When the *New Moral World* ceased, I contributed papers on the social movement in the *Herald of Progress*, edited by John Cramp, and incorporated this periodical in the *Reasoner*, commenced in 1846, of which twenty-six volumes appeared consecutively. The *Counsellor* contained communications from William Cooper, the chief writer of the Rochdale Equitable Pioneers, and one from Mr. Abram Howard, the President of the Rochdale Society at this time.[1] The *English Leader*, which appeared under two editors, and extended to two volumes, continued to be the organ for special papers on Co-operation. The *Secular World* also included a distinct department, entitled the "Social Economist," of which the chief writer was Mr. Ebenezer Edger before named, who promoted Co-operation with the ability and zeal of his family, never hesitating at personal cost to himself. Afterwards the *Social Economist* appeared as a separate journal under the joint editorship of myself and Mr. Edward Owen Greening, who had previously projected the *Industrial Partnerships Record*, published in Manchester in 1862, the first paper which treated Co-operation as a commercial movement. Co-operative stores and productive manufacturing societies had by that time grown to an importance which warranted them being treated as industrial enterprises, affording opportunities to the general

[1] See Part II. "Hist. of the Equitable Pioneers of Rochdale."

public of profitable investment. The *Industrial Partnership Record* was the first paper that published "Share Lists" of those concerns. Mr. Greening afterwards established the *Agricultural Economist*[1] (a name suggested by me), the largest commercial paper the co-operative movement had had, to which, at periods, I was a contributor. Of separate pamphlets the best known is the "History of Co-operation in Rochdale," narrating its career from 1844 to 1892 (published by Sonnenschein). Mr. William Cooper, of the Rochdale Pioneers, in a letter to the *Daily News* (1861) reported that as many as 260 societies were commenced within two or three years after the publication of the "History" from 1844 to 1892, through the evidence afforded in the story of what can be done by people with the idea of self-help in their minds. In some towns the story was read night after night to meetings of working men.[2] This was also done at Melbourne, Australia. Many years after the appearance of the work, when its story might be regarded as old, Mr. Pitman reprinted it in the *Co-operator*, it being supposed to be of interest to a new generation of co-operators. It has been translated in the *Courier de Lyons* by Mons. Talandier and by Sig. Garrido into Spanish. It has appeared also in many other languages, so that the Rochdale men have the merit of doing things distant people are willing to hear of.

In 1871 the thirtieth volume of the *Reasoner* was commenced, which extended over two years. I issued it at the request of a committee of co-operators and others in Lancashire and Yorkshire, who made themselves responsible for the printing expenses. The editor was to be paid out of profits; but the comet of profits had so large an orbit that it never appeared in the editor's sphere.

The "Moral Errors of Co-operation," a paper originally read at the Social Science Congress in the Guildhall, London, has been frequently reprinted by various societies. The "Hundred Masters'" system, written in aid of the workmen

[1] Now the *Agricultural Economist*, an illustrated monthly paper of which thirty-seven volumes have appeared.

[2] The Blaydon Store was thus commenced by Mr. Cowen, M.P., reading the story to the villagers there. Many stores elsewhere were founded in a similar way.

when the famous struggle took place in Rochdale, when Co-operation halted on the way there, originally appeared in the *Morning Star*, a paper which gave more aid to progressive movements than any daily paper of that day in London. "Industrial Partnerships, Divested of Sentimentality," was written to explain their business basis. The "Logic of Co-operation" and "Commercial Co-operation" were two pamphlets of which many thousands were circulated, written in support of a question of establishing in co-operative production the same principle of dividing profits with the purchaser, which breathed life into the moribund stores of a former day.

In maturer years, some authors are glad to have it forgotten that they have written certain works in their earlier days. For me no regret remains. Other persons have, in many instances, considerately come forward and taken this responsibility on themselves, either by printing editions of my books and putting their own name on the title-page; or by copying whole chapters into works of their own, as their own; or by translating a whole book into another language, where it had the honour of appearing as an original work in that tongue by an author unknown to me. The "History of Co-operation in Rochdale" has as often appeared without my name as with it. In Paisley a summary was made of it and sold without my knowledge. After it was done a copy of it was sent to me, and I was asked whether I would permit it appearing without my name. I said I would; the reason given for the request being that people would be more likely to read the book if they did not know who was the author, which I took to be a delicate way of telling me I was not a popular writer. The Chambers Brothers published a paper in their *Journal*, by one of their contributors, who had interwoven essential portions of the Rochdale story into his article without reference to its origin, no doubt apprehensive lest the mention of the author might jeopardise its insertion. But when the Chambers became aware of it, they frankly supplied the omission by a note in their *Journal*.

Even distance, which lends enchantment to so many things, can do nothing for me. A few years ago an American preacher called upon me, and told me that one of his brethren

had printed an edition of one of my books, "Public Speaking and Debate" (written for co-operative advocates and others), and composed a preface of his own and put his own name on the title-page, which had done the sale a world of good. Some of the proceeds would have done me good in those days, but my friendly informant did not advert to the probability of that. Not long ago the editor of an *International Journal*, a paper issued in London with a view to furnish benighted Englishmen with original translations of foreign literature, bestowed upon his readers chapter after chapter of what he led them to believe, and what he believed himself, was a new and readable history of certain co-operative stores in England, based on the recent German work of Eugene Richter. After this had proceeded for some weeks I sent word to the editor that if he was at any expense in providing his translation, I could send him the chapters in English, as they were part of a book published by me in London sixteen years before. The editor sent me the volume from which he was printing, that I might see in what way he had been misled, and discontinued further publication. The book was entitled "Co-operative Stores" and published by Leypoldt and Holt, of New York, who probably had no knowledge from what materials the work had been compiled. Eugene Richter's work, on which the Leypoldt one is based, I have never seen. As far as reprints of anything I have written are concerned, I have given permission without conditions to any one asking it, content that he thought some usefulness might thereby arise. An unexpected instance of care for my reputation, as shown by the thoughtful omission of my name, occurred in the *Quarterly Review*. A well-known writer [1] having supplied an article on a Co-operative topic, the "History of the Rochdale Pioneers" was one of five or six works placed at the head of it. Of course the names of all the writers were duly added. But when the editor came to mine, something had to be done. To put down the book as authorless had been a singularity that might attract attention. To avoid this the name was omitted of every other writer in the list, and for the first time an article in the *Quarterly* was devoted to six nameless

[1] Mr. Frederick Hill.

authors, who had all written books of public interest. The envious man in Æsop by forfeiting one eye put out two others, by losing my head five other writers were decapitated, and have gone down to posterity headless in *Quarterly* history.

In June, 1860, a record of co-operative progress, conducted exclusively by working men, and entitled the *Co-operator*, was commenced. Its first editor was Mr. E. Longfield. Mr. Henry Pitman, of Manchester, was one of its early promoters. This journal represented the Lancashire and Yorkshire co-operative societies. By this time the reputation of the Rochdale Society continually attracted foreign visitors to it. Professors of political economy and students of social life frequently sent inquiries as to its progress. The letters which many of these gentlemen wrote, and the accounts they published in foreign journals of what had come under their notice in visits to England, form a very interesting portion of the papers in the *Co-operator*. Professor V. A. Huber, of Wernigerode, was a frequent and instructive contributor. Early in 1860, Gabriel Glutsak, civil engineer of Vienna, wrote to the Leeds Corn Mill Society for their statutes and those of the Rochdale Equitable Pioneers, with a view to submit them to his Government, and to ask permission to establish similar societies there. In 1863, L. Miloradovitsch, residing at Tschernigor, in Russia, two weeks distant from St. Petersburg, contributed an interesting paper on Russian associations. Mr. Franz Wirth, editor of the *Arbeitgeber*, Frankfort, contributed information concerning Co-operation in Germany, and reported concerning their German *Co-operator*, the *Innung der Zukunft*, by Mr. Schulze, of Delitzsch.

At first the *Co-operator* was a penny monthly. At the end of twelve months it was stated to have reached a circulation of 10,000 copies. This was an illusion by confounding the number printed with those sold. When the first shriek of debt occurred, bales of obstinate numbers were found which would not carry themselves off. Co-operation always proceeded under greater restrictions than those which trade imposed upon itself. Besides pledging itself to genuineness, fair weight, and fair prices, the editors of its official papers frequently refused to recognise applications of the principles, however profitable, which were not considered useful or

creditable to working men. Mr. Pitman, later editor of the *Co-operator*, kept no terms with any who wished to go into tobacco manufacturing or brewing, and ultimately became disagreeable to those who thought of having their children vaccinated.

The periodical literature of the societies continued to present various drolleries of thought, though not executed with that Japanese vividness of colour observable in its primitive efforts. If a passing notice of them is made here, it is merely that the narrative may not be wanting in the light and shade belonging to it. If the wilful reader should bestow as much attention upon periodicals the present writer has edited as he has upon co-operative journals, such reader would no doubt find (of another kind) quite as much matter to amuse him.

In the *Co-operator* the artistic imagination was again occupied, as in earlier years, in endeavouring to devise symbols of Co-operation, but nothing very original was arrived at. Societies fell back upon the old symbol of the Hand in Hand, to which they endeavoured to give a little freshness by writing under it the following verse—

> "Hand in hand, brother,
> Let us march on.
> Ne'er let us faint, brother,
> Till victory's won."

It did not occur to the poet that the worthy brothers would faint much sooner if they endeavoured to march on hand in hand. Co-operation has many applications, but crossing the streets of London is not one of them, for if several persons should endeavour to do that hand in hand they would all be knocked down. The revivers of the "hand in hand" symbol seem to be regardless of Mr. Urquhart's doctrine, imported from a land of lepers, that shaking hands is an unwarrantable proceeding, a liberty not free from indelicacy, wanting in self-respect on the part of those who offer or submit to it. The co-operator of 1862 had recourse to the figure of our old friend, the young man endeavouring to break a bundle of sticks; but he is now represented as doing it in so dainty and fastidious a way, that he is not likely to succeed if he operated upon them singly; and there stand by him two young co-operators, one apparently a Scotchman, wearing a

kilt, both, however, watching the operation as though they were perfectly satisfied that nothing would come of it. A belief that art must have some further resources in the way of symbols, led the editor of the *Co-operator* to offer a prize to students at the Manchester School of Art for a fresh emblem of unity. The best of four designs was published, representing an arch with a very melancholy curvature, on which reposed the oft-seen figure of Justice with her eyes bandaged, so that she cannot see what she is doing; and near to her was a lady representing Commerce, who appears to be playing the violin. Underneath was a youth apparently tying the immemorial bundle of sticks, and a pitman wearing a cap of liberty, with a spade by his side, apparently suggesting that freedom was something to be dug for. In the centre was a spirited group of three men at an anvil, one forging and two striking, in Ashantee attire, the limbs and body being quite bare. The flying flakes of molten iron must have been encountered under great disadvantages. The action at the forge is certainly co-operative, but the editor betrayed his scant appreciation of it by saying it would make a capital design for "our brothers in unity" (the Amalgamated Engineers were meant); but "our brothers in unity" did not take it up.

The third volume of the *Co-operator* was edited by Mr. Henry Pitman. He introduced a new illustration in which two workmen were approaching two bee-hives with a view to study the bees' habits; but, unfortunately, a stout swarm of bees were hovering over their heads, making the contemplation of their performance rather perilous. A bee-hive does not admit of much artistic display, and bees themselves are not models for the imitation of human beings, since they are absolutely mad about work, and brutal to the drones when they have served their turn. A society conducted on bee principles would make things very uncomfortable to the upper classes, and the capitalists would all be killed as soon as their money had been borrowed from them. The popularity of bees is one of the greatest impostures in industrial literature. However, the *Co-operator*, under Mr. Pitman's management, was a very useful paper. Mr. Matthew Davenport Hill, Recorder of Birmingham, and Mr. William Howitt oft wrote in it very

valuable letters. Dr. King, of Brighton, sent information to it. Canon Kingsley and the chief of the friends of industrial progress with whom he acted were contributors to its pages. Writers actively engaged in the movement supplied papers or letters, and foreign correspondents furnished interesting facts and inquiries which will long have value. But the success of journals of progress is not measurable by their merits. The people the editor has in view to serve are the uninformed, and they do not care about papers because they are uninformed. It is to the credit of social propagandists that they appeal to reason. This is against their success, since reason is seldom popular. When Mr. Thornton Hunt left the *Spectator* he joined a journal which understood the popular taste, and the shrewd proprietor at once said to him, "Take note, Mr. Hunt, what we want on this paper is not strong thinking, but strong writing." The *Co-operator* had little strong writing, that not being in its line, and was not overweighted by strong thinking; but it had merits which deserved greater success than it met with. It very early hung out signs of debt, and gave a great scream on the occasion, and actually put a black border round the statement in its own pages, as though it was anxious to announce its melancholy demise while it was yet alive. Some one had revealed to the editor the difference between 10,000 printed and 10,000 sold. Mr. J. S. Mill and Miss Helen Taylor gave £10 each to promote the continuance of the *Co-operator*, of which eight more volumes were issued. In 1871, however, the debt amounted to £1,000. The editor, nevertheless, refused to relinquish it, or accept an offer from the co-operators to purchase it. It was not probable that he loved liability, though it had that appearance. It was, doubtless, from a natural reluctance to relinquish a journal which he had conducted with usefulness and honourable perseverance during so many years, that he clung to it. It had but one printer during all that time, who had cheerfully suffered that considerable debt to accumulate. If in patience or in faith he had shown this perseverance of trust, it was equally unprecedented and inexplicable. Had his virtues been known in London, he would have been much sought after by editors of other periodicals, who would have appreciated such a

printer. Ultimately the debt was paid rightly and creditably, mainly by gifts from co-operative societies and votes from the Wholesale, who paid at one time the residue unliquidated, of upwards of £500.

To the *Co-operator* has succeeded the *Co-operative News*, of which nine volumes had appeared, 1878. This journal is the official representative of the societies. A Newspaper Society was formed to establish the *Co-operative News*. At the request of the committee, which included the leading co-operators of the North of England, I wrote the earlier prospectuses of the paper, and as they purposed buying up Mr. Pitman's *Co-operator*, I and Mr. Greening relinquished to them the *Social Economist*, which we conducted in London, in order that the new journal might have a clear field and the widest chance of a profitable career. The *Co-operative News* is now owned by co-operative societies who hold shares in it. For a time individuals held shares. I was the last who did. In 1876 I resigned mine in order that there might be that unity in its ownership which, in the opinion of its promoters, promised most efficiency for its management. During an important period it was edited by Mr. J. C. Farn, who increased the economy of its management. It was afterwards conducted by Mr. Joseph Smith and Mr. Samuel Bamford. *Co-operative News*, though a relevant, is not a profitable name. The outside public look less into it than its general interest would repay, believing it to be a purely class paper. Indeed, co-operators would take it in with more readiness if it bore a fresher name—a routine title tires the mind. Working men some years ago would not take in the *Working Man*, one of the most instructive journals devised for them. Working men are not fond of being advertised once a week as working men : for the same reason the middle class would not be enthusiastic on behalf of a paper called the *Middle-class Man*. Mr. Cobden thought, when the *Morning Star* was commenced, that the public would value what they very much needed—news. But news is only of value in the eyes of those who can understand its significance, and that implies considerable political capacity. What the average public wanted was interpreted news — ready-made opinions—having little time and not much power to form their own. Journals which gave them less news and more

opinion had greater ascendancy than a journal which sought mainly to serve them by enabling them to think for themselves. If men in a movement knew the value of a good paper representing it, guiding it, defending it, they would certainly provide one. A co-operative society without intelligence, or an industrial movement without an organ, is like a steamboat without a propeller. It is all vapour and clatter without progress. An uninformed party is like a mere sailing boat. It only moves when outside winds blow, and is not always sure where it will be blown to then.

In commencing their *Journal* the co-operators entered upon a new department of manufacture—the manufacture of a newspaper. This is an art in which they had no experience, but in which they have displayed as much skill as people usually do who undertake an unaccustomed business. Journalism in its business respects requires capital, skill, and technical knowledge, as other productive trades do. Any one familiar with the mechanism of a newspaper can tell without being told—when it is conducted by charity. Every column betrays its cheapness. It is not the flag, it is then the rag of a party, and every page in it is more or less in tatters. Instead of being the weekly library of the members, consisting of well-written, well-chosen articles, readable and reliable, it is the waste-paper basket of the movement, and everything goes into it which comes to hand and costs nothing. No one is responsible for its policy; its excellences, if it has any, come by chance; its subjects are not predetermined; the treatment of them is not planned; and a journal of this description represents a movement without concert. Poverty is always fatal to journalistic force. Those who manage a poor journal mean well, but they do not know what to mean when they have no means. They cannot be said to fail, because men who aim at nothing commonly hit it, and this is the general sort of success they do achieve. Indeed, a journal may do worse than aim at nothing, because then nobody is hurt when its conductors strike their object. It is much more serious when persons are permitted to be attacked, and local views—however excellent—are put forward in its pages in a party spirit, with disparagement of others, producing excitement instead of direction. A representative journal owes equal

respect and equal protection to all parties, guiding with dignity, securing progress with good feeling. There is a difficulty in conducting an official paper—a difficulty everybody ought to see from the first—the difficulty of being impartial. Impartiality is generally considered insipid. Few writers can be entertaining unless they are abusive; and few editors are good for anything unless they are partisan. If they have to strike out of an article the imputations in it, they commonly strike out the sense along with it, until the article has no more flavour than a turnip. Still, if there be no choice, it is better to have a turnip journal than a cayenne pepper organ—better to have a salmon for an editor, who is always swimming about his subject, than a porcupine one, who is sticking his fretful quills into every reader, and pricking the movement once a week.

Every new member of a store should be required to take the official paper. This alone would increase the circulation of the *Co-operative News* 30,000 a year. If every new member took the paper, every old member would be very much wondered at if he did not take it also. No groceries carried into any member's house ought to be warranted unless the newspaper of the stores went with them.

Co-operation is like a bicycle. If those who ride it keep going they go pleasantly and swiftly, and travel far, but if they stop they must dismount or tumble. There are many great measures a statesman could devise, and which he would gladly have his name associated with, which he cannot venture to bring forward unless there be educated opinion to appeal to. He is obliged to confess that "the time has not arrived." This is in some cases a cant excuse put forward by timid or insincere statesmen. But the truth of the plea is too obvious where the public are ignorant. In co-operative societies, in their smaller way, the same thing is true. Every intelligent board of directors know that they could do much better for the society if the members were better informed. There is not a co-operative society in the kingdom which might not be twice as rich as it is, if the members were as intelligent as they should be. Without knowledge, all movement is like that of the vane—motion without progress, whereas Co-operation should resemble the screw steamer and unite motion with advancement.

CHAPTER XXXV

FAMOUS PROMOTERS

"Of all the paths which lead to human bliss,
The most secure and grateful to our steps,
With mercy and humanity is marked
The sweet-tongued rumour of a gracious deed."

RICHARD GLOVER.

IN 1848 Co-operation received unexpected recognition, great beyond anything before accorded to it, and one which only a man of singular fearlessness would have accorded: it was from John Stuart Mill. In a work, sure to be read by the most influential thinkers, he said: "Far, however, from looking upon any of the various classes of Socialists [1] with any approach to disrespect, I honour the intention of almost all who are publicly known in that character, as well as the arguments and talents of several, and I regard them, taken collectively, as one of the most valuable elements of human improvement now existing, both from the impulse they give to the reconsideration and discussion of all the most important questions, and from the ideas they have contributed to many, ideas from which the most advanced supporters of the existing order of society have still much to learn." [2] When this tribute was rendered to these social insurgents their fortunes were at a very low ebb. Only three years before they had publicly failed at Queenwood. The prophets who had done their best to fulfil their sinister predictions were exultant, contemptuous, and conceited. It was no pleasant thing to bear the name of "Socialist" when Mr. Mill spoke of them with

[1] Co-operators were then generally known by their old community name of "Socialists."

[2] J. S. Mill, "Pol. Econ.," vol. i. p. 265.

this generous respect. He even went farther than vindicating their character—he suggested a justification of one of the least accepted of their schemes. Mr. Mill said: "The objection ordinarily made to a system of community of property and equal distribution of produce—'that each person would be incessantly occupied in evading his share of the work'—is, I think, in general, considerably over-stated. There is a kind of work, *that of fighting*, which is never conducted on any other than the *Co-operative system:* and neither in a rude nor in a civilised society has the *supposed difficulty* been experienced. In no community has idleness ever been a cause of failure."[1]

Long before Miss Martineau visited the Socialist Communities of America she held communication with co-operators at home. "The Manchester and Salford Association for the Spread of Co-operative Knowledge" wrote to her, as her illustrations of Political Economy had interested the society. Miss Martineau sent a reply in which she professed that their interest in her labours was very gratifying to her. One passage is worth citing here for its valid import: "Within a short time, and happily before the energy of youth is past, I have been awakened from a state of aristocratic prejudice to a clear conviction of the equality of human rights, and of the paramount duty of society to provide for the support, comfort, and enlightenment of every member born into it. All that I write is now with a view to the illustration of these great truths: with the hope of pressing upon the rich a conviction of their obligations, and of inducing the poor to urge their claims with moderation and forbearance, and to bear about with them the credentials of intelligence and good deserts." Miss Martineau took care to indicate that the equality which she favoured was the equality of human right, and not of condition.

Lord Brougham personally promoted Co-operation. The first part of the "History of the Pioneers of Rochdale," by the present writer, was dedicated to him by his consent. Where others were content to vaguely and generally praise a principle, Lord Brougham would single out and name for their credit and advantage those who had promoted or served it. This is never done save by those who intend to aid a cause. Lord Brougham was the first politician of great mark who cared

[1] "Pol. Econ.," vol. i. p. 251.

about general progress, and whatever faults he had of personal ambition, he had little of the common fear of being compromised by being identified with the promotion of social welfare, because the persons caring for it had unpopular opinions of their own on other subjects.

Those who write the most useful books have often to wait long for appreciation. At the time of their appearance the public may not be caring about the subject, and when it does care about it, it has forgotten those who have written upon it. This or some such cause has led to the comparative neglect of the books of Arthur John Booth, M.A., author of a work entitled the "Founder of Socialism in England" and of a volume upon "St. Simon," being a chapter on the History of Socialism in France, remarkable for its research and completeness of statement. This work, like the previous one named, has been far less spoken of and read in socialist circles than books so conscientious deserve to be. Several of the disciples of Robert Owen have been designated to write some memorial of him, yet to this day (1877) the most complete view of his principles and character which has appeared is that from the pen of Mr. Booth—which embraces other subjects than those in Mr. Sargent's life of Robert Owen, and gives a more detailed account of his efforts in originating public education and promoting the art of industrial association in England. No one can peruse Mr. Booth's book without acquiring a very high estimate of Mr. Owen's character and capacity. Mr. Booth records that Mr. Owen not only incited parliamentary committees to inquire into ameliorative plans and recommend them, but he supplied them with the designs of industrial establishments and calculations of costs which must have been the result of great labour and expense to him.

The disciples of St. Simon were mad compared with the disciples of Robert Owen. Gustave I'Eichthal, who had been born a Jew, and traversed many faiths, made his confession of Simonism in these terms: "I believe in God; I believe in St. Simon, and that it is Enfantin who is St. Simon's successor. To him," I'Eichthal said, "it is given to root up and to destroy, to build and to plant, in him all human life has its development and progress: in him are peace, riches, science, the future of the world. We know it, and it is this which

gives us strength. The world does not know it, and it is this which constitutes its weakness." This is the crazy adulation of the genuine enthusiast who has lost all measure of men, which the world is continually hearing, with decreasing power of believing. St. Simon was a man who had as much philosophy as enthusiasm. When he found himself unable to complete his schemes and on the verge of starvation, he determined to shoot himself at a certain hour. That he might not forget that unpleasant resolution, he occupied himself in the interval in looking over the schemes of reform to which he had fruitlessly devoted his life, and when the time came round he shot himself as he had intended. Human progress never advances either rapidly or far at once. All who undertake to introduce new views of an entirely distinct character from those prevailing, soon find themselves, as it were, outside of humanity, where, having few to sympathise with them, they oft fancy themselves deserted, when the fact is they have deserted the world. In time their originality becomes eccentricity, their solitariness renders them morbid, and eventually, like the disciples of St. Simon, they play more or less what their compeers deem fantastic tricks, and schemes which began in hope end in ridicule.

Onlookers continually forget that the progress of wisdom must always depend upon the capacity of the multitude to advance, whom ignorance makes slow-footed: these philosophers should not be impetuous. We know on legal authority that a fool a day is born, and they mostly live. Patience is as great a virtue in propagandism as fortitude.

Jules St. Andre le Chevalier was one of the disciples of St. Simon and one of their orators. A brother of the celebrated Père Lacordaire went to hear him address a large audience at Dijon. The devotion in the heart of the Simonian preacher carried everybody with him. It is wonderful to me how one so obese, adroit, and master of all the arts of this venal world, could have moved any one to enthusiasm. By personal grace, in which he excelled when young, he might have charmed audiences, but serious enthusiasm must have been impossible to him. Skilfulness which dazzled you, he had in abundance, but not a tone remained which could inspire trust in persons of any experience in enthusiasm; and St. Andre knew such

persons by instinct, and avoided them. He was a master in devices and resources, and amid men stronger than himself he would have been a force of value. Under other circumstances he was a costly colleague. At the co-operative agency, some years in operation in Charlotte Street, London, of which he was an inspirer, he saw fortunes confiscated which he should have prevented. He had seen in his French experience what others had seen in English movements, that it is an immorality to permit without protest generous men risking more money in any cause, however good, than they are able and willing to lose. It is either inexperienced zeal, or traitorous enthusiasm, which connives at risks and losses which warn men in the future against aiding unfriended causes. When the secrets of the Black Chamber of the late Emperor of the French were disclosed, it was found that St. Andre had an office in it, and was in the pay of the Second Empire. The function of agents of the Black Chamber was to corrupt the press of other countries, and obtain the insertion of articles in favour of the Bonaparte Government. The personal knowledge St. Andre had of social and political leaders in England, it appears, he was able to sell for a price—and did it. He died before the crash of that fraudulent Government came.

Mazzini, in presenting some books to the Sunderland Co-operative Society in 1864, said in a letter to Mr. T. Dixon : "It is my deep conviction that we are unavoidably approaching an epoch of mankind, history, and life, in which the ruling principle in all the branches of moral, political, and social activity will be the simple one—'Let *every* man be judged, loved, placed, and rewarded *according to his works*.' Of this all-transforming principle, you—the associated working men throughout Europe—are the precursors in the economical sphere."

Giuseppe Mazzini was as distinguished an advocate of Association in Italy as Owen in England, or Blanc in France, but it was the nature of Mazzini to dwell more on the moral conditions of progress than upon the material. According to Madame Venturi, who has given the most vivid account of Italian Socialism extant, associations of working men have spread rapidly in the cities of Tuscany, Lombardy, the Romagna, and Southern Italy, rising up in the footsteps of the

national revolution. That of Naples in 1860 counted more than twelve hundred members. All these associations have been organised in imitation of one founded by Mazzini, years before that time, in Genoa; and their character is quite distinct from that manifested by similar societies in England or France, which mainly attempt social and economical progress. The peculiarity of the Italian movement is that, while the working men of other countries start from a theory of *rights*, the Italian working men—like their great teacher—start from a moral point of view—a theory of *duty*. They take his motto, "God and Humanity," and accept his doctrine—that rights can spring only from duties fulfilled. This characteristic of the movement among Italian artisans is also remarkable from the contrast it presents to the materialism of the aristocratic or moderate party in Italy, one of whose most prominent members, La Farina, has written, "The only parent of revolutions is the stomach."

In the rooms belonging to these societies in France there is sometimes written up, "It is forbidden to discuss religion or politics"; whereas in Italy, instead of limiting themselves to material economic interests, they devote themselves likewise, if not prominently, to moral instruction and patriotic work. These societies contributed a large share of combatants to Garibaldi's expedition, and to those subsequently despatched from Genoa to Sicily. Three-fourths of the signatures to the petition of 1860 in Italy, for the removal of the condemnation to death which had rested on the head of Mazzini for twenty-eight years, were by working men. The Genoese Society of that day wishing to celebrate the anniversary of the Sicilian insurrection, decreed that the best way was to purchase three hundred copies of Mazzini's book, "Duties of Man," and distribute them gratuitously to poor working men.

In Florence an Association was formed, called "Fratellanza Artigiana"—Working-men's Brotherhood—which aims at a general organisation of the whole class throughout Italy, embracing the double aim of moral patriotic education—through a people's journal, schools, circulating libraries, lectures, and the emancipation of labour, through the establishment of banks for the people in different localities, destined to furnish with advances of capital, such *voluntary* associations

of working men as give proofs of their honesty and capability, and intend to work independently of intermediate capitalists.[1] Since that date Professor Saffi, one of the Triumvirs of Rome in 1849, has promoted the formation of co-operative societies in Italy, having also English economic features; co-operative stores, as we understand them, being established in many places.

Whether it is good fortune or ill fortune to be able to count an emperor among socialist advocates, altogether depends whether his personal character or career is likely to awaken confidence or distrust in associative life; certain it is that an emperor has appeared on the side of modern Socialism. During his imprisonment in Ham, between 1841 and 1845, Louis Napoleon, who had previously resided in England and had probably seen Mr. Rowland Hill's plan, published one of his own, which he called by the same name, the "Extinction of Pauperism," in which he added the project of the State organising (which includes patronising and politically controlling) "twenty millions of consciences." The future emperor talked wonderfully like the Socialist agitators, whom he afterwards sent so liberally to Cayenne and colonised there. He said: "Manufacturing and commercial industry has neither system, organisation, nor aim. It is like a machine working without a regulator, and totally unconcerned about its moving power. Crushing between its wheels both men and matter, it depopulates the country, crowds the population [who survive, he must mean] into narrow spaces without air, enfeebles both mind and body, and finally casts them into the street when it no longer requires them, those men who, to enrich it, have sacrificed strength, youth, and existence. A true Saturn of labour, manufacturing industry, devours its children and lives but upon its destruction." Very few workmen know anything about Saturn and its unpaternal ways; still this description with its socialistic exaggeration in every line, gives a substantially true picture that workmen have a bad time of it. That something more than Savings Banks are needed for the ill-paid workman, he shows in an admirable sentence: "To seek to mitigate the wretchedness of men who have not sufficient food, by proposing that they shall annually

[1] See Pref. to "Regulations of the Leghorn Society of Mutual Succour."

put aside something which they have not got, is either a derision or a folly." The Imperial Socialist writes: "It is a high and holy mission to strive to do away with enmity, to heal all wounds, to soothe the sufferings of humanity, by uniting the people of the same country in one common interest." [1] But breaking oaths, cutting throats, and deportations were not socialist methods of fulfilling this mission. This remarkable author caught the idea without caring for the principles which animated his famous teacher Louis Blanc. His essay, however, has much merit and some phrases of felicity, as when he contrasts the old feudality of arms with the modern "feudality of money," for which he had apparently an honest contempt all his life. This "plan" of socialism, which the late emperor sketched, it is but justice to say, has the merit of plausibleness in some respects, moderation of statement, silence on questions by which other writers have alarmed the reader, and a freedom from eccentricities of proposal which have so often submerged merciful schemes in derision.

The Comte de Paris has written a book, neither utopian nor paternal, of singular fairness and discernment upon "Trades Unions," which, indeed, does much more than describe them; it explains industrial partnership and Co-operation to the French workman; and, more still, it distinguishes and attacks the modern middle-class ideal of a state of things in which capital reigns supreme, and attracts all profit to itself, and as the *Spectator* puts it, "sternly represses, in the name of economic science and of law, all attempts of the workers to secure their independence and raise their condition by combination and organisation." It denotes great capacity for social thought in the prince to perceive that this ideal must be changed for one more equitable before society can have industrial peace within its borders.

In the story of the Lost Communities mention is made of Dr. Yeats as a teacher at the Queenwood Hall Educational Establishment. Dr. Yeats with honourable modesty reminds me that he was less known as a teacher and an author than the following gentlemen, who were all engaged at Queenwood,

[1] There was more force of writing in this pamphlet of Louis Napoleon than he afterwards displayed—probably owing to the revising hand of Louis Blanc, who was in communication with him at the time.

under Mr. Edmondson: John Tyndall, F.R.S., Edward Frankland, F.R.S., Thomas Hirst, F.R.S., H. Debus, F.R.S. Professor of Chemistry at the Royal College of Science for Ireland, Robert Galloway, dates from Queenwood; and his colleague, the Professor of Physics, W. F. Barrett, was a pupil at Queenwood. An account of Prof. Tyndall's connection with Queenwood may be found in No. X. of the "Photographic Portraits of Men of Eminence" for March, 1864.[1]

The Dutch, who if they do dream always dream about business, succeeded in establishing successful Pauper Colonies on the east bank of the Zuyder Zee in 1818. The idea was derived from a Chinese mandarin, who presided over a colony of agricultural emigrants from China, situated at Java, in the East Indies. General Van Bosch brought the idea to Holland and originated the Dutch Colonies. In England the orthography of his name would have been altered into Van Bosh. In 1843 these colonies were visited and described by a member of the Agricultural Employment Institution of England, who reported that "Beggary and mendicity had disappeared in Holland, for in a journey of 500 miles he had seen only three little boys asking charity, one at Rotterdam and two at Delft, although the country had swarmed with beggars previously to the establishment of the Home Colonies." In 1832 Mr. Rowland Hill (subsequently Sir Rowland) published "A Plan for the Gradual Extinction of Pauperism." In 1857 I asked him to inform me whether the Dutch Colonies had been discredited or remained useful. He answered, "Since 1831, the year in which the greater part of the pamphlet was written, changes have taken place which materially affect the question. These changes are chiefly an improved poor law; the establishment of systematic emigration and (as I believe) the abandonment of the Pauper Colonies in Belgium and Holland. With regard to any present discussion of the question, it would of course be necessary carefully to investigate the cause of such abandonment, but circumstanced as I now am, I need scarcely say that I have no time for it."[2]

[1] Published by Lovell, Reade & Co., Henrietta Street, Covent Garden.

[2] Sir Rowland Hill was the third of five brothers, of whom Matthew Davenport Hill, the Recorder of Birmingham, was the eldest. Mr. M. D. Hill was born in Birmingham, Sir Rowland in Kidderminster.

A work long needed appeared in 1878, one calculated to give systematic form to Socialism, namely, Mr. David Syme's "Outlines of an Industrial Science." Utterly different from many similar books, it is neither pretentious nor obscure, nor a theory of one idea. The reader soon finds he is in the hands of a writer who can think; not over the heads of common people—in a region of his own where no one can tell whether he is right or wrong—but in the sphere in which common people think and with the power of making plain what perplexes them. He shows there is no sense in the unexplainable name Political Economy, which if it means anything it is that the State should direct industry, which no body in England ever proposed or desired that it should. Then economists proceed by the deductive method; that is, they assume some principle of desire in all men, and infer from what that principle implies, what men should do to obtain their object. For instance, Mr. James Mill takes the principle that all men desire Power; his son, John Stuart Mill, assumes that all men desire Wealth mainly or solely. They, and economists generally, from Adam Smith downwards, define political economy as the science of wealth. This, Mr. Syme says, is treating mankind as monomaniacs of avarice, and he maintains that society would be equally impossible if men were scientifically misers or philanthropists. Wealth is no more a universal and sole motive than power, or honour, or health, or fame. Mr. Syme argues that there might as well be a science of each of these subjects as of wealth. Plainly, industry being wider than all, and being pursued from a thousand motives besides that of gain, an industrial science is a far more appropriate, a more needed and more instructive term. Mr. Syme, though a journalist, with whom writing in haste generally leads to inaccuracy of expression, is neither redundant nor careless, but brief and precise in expression.

A work of great value, entitled a "History of English Guilds," was written by Toulmin Smith, of Birmingham, and published subsequently by his daughter Lucy, who had assisted him in the great labour of compiling it. The information is such as could only be collected by one who had his sympathy and industry, and his immense capacity of research and peculiar knowledge where to look in the historic wilderness of early

organised industry. As respects the delineation of industrial life or utility of conception, no work has appeared which a co-operator seeking guidance from the wisdom of past times could more profitably peruse. Mr. Smith says, "The English Guild was an institution of local self-help, which, before poor laws were invented, took the place, in old times, of the modern friendly or benefit society ; but with a higher aim, for while it joined all classes together in a care for the needy and for objects of common welfare, it did not neglect the forms and the practice of Religion, Justice, and Morality."

In 1852 appeared the *Journal of Association* in London. It was conducted by several promoters of working men's associations. It advertised the tracts of Christian Socialists and the Central Co-operative Agency. It was a somewhat grave periodical. "Parson Lot" contributed some poetry to it, and its selections were good. The conductors had the advantage of knowing poetry when they saw it (which was a new and welcome feature in this species of literature), and some of them could write it, which was better.

The *Christian Socialist*, like other publications devoted to questions of progress, very soon appeared in two forms. The first volume was a tolerable large quarto, the second was a modest octavo. The work was altogether discontinued at the second volume. Its social creed was very clear. Its watch-words were association and exchange instead of competition and profits. Its doctrine as to Christianity was not quite so definable. It maintained that Socialism without Christianity is as lifeless as the feathers without the bird, however skilfully the stuffer may dress them up into an artificial semblance of life. Christianity may be true and sacred in the eyes of a co-operator, but he cannot well connect the special doctrines of Christianity with those of Co-operation. When Mr. Pitman associated anti-vaccination with Co-operation the incongruity was apparent to most persons. If an attempt was made to inculcate atheistic Co-operation few would approve the connection of an industrial scheme with that irrelevant form of opinion. Christian Socialism is an irrelevance of the same kind, though it sins on the popular side.[1] The editor of the

[1] "Christian Socialism" was a name which I never liked, but regarded as a mistake, tending to alienate on the one hand Christians who were not

Christian Socialist pointed out that "every Socialist system which has abided has endeavoured to stand, or unconsciously to itself has stood, upon those moral grounds of righteousness, self-sacrifice, and mutual affection called common brotherhood, which Christianity vindicates to itself as an everlasting heritage." But these four qualities of righteousness in the sense of right doing, self-sacrifice, mutual affection, and common brotherhood, are equally the attributes of the moral conscience among all men, and were the sources of co-operative inspiration. Special doctrines alone are the "heritage of Christianity" proper. Mr. Ruskin has summed up the characteristics of the Christian Socialist school in a remarkable passage. "I loved," he says, "Mr. Maurice, learned much from him, worked under his guidance and authority. . . . But I only think of him as the centre of a group of students whom his amiable sentimentalism at once exalted and stimulated, while it relieved them of any painful necessities of exact scholarship in divinity. . . . Consolatory equivocations of his kind have no enduring place in literature. . . . He was a tender-hearted Christian gentleman, who successfully, for a time, promoted the charities of his faith and parried its discussion." [1]

It is right, however, to say that the spirit shown by Mr. Maurice's disciples was free alike from condescension or assumption. They were not dogmatic; they asserted but did not insist on other persons adopting their views. You felt that it would be a pleasure to them if you could think as they did; but they made it but a temporary offence in you if you did not, and treated with equality every one in whom they recognised the endeavour to do that which was right according to the light he had. Mr. Thomas Hughes in his "Memoirs of a Brother" gives the authentic history of the origin of this party, in passages of robust disarming candour which is the charm of Mr. Hughes's writing. Though the term "Christian Socialist" [2] caused Co-operation to be regarded in Parliament

Socialists, and on the other Socialists who do not like to call themselves Christians. But being myself a Christian as well as a Socialist, I had no personal reason for objecting to the name (E. V. Neale, *Co-operative News*).

[1] John Ruskin, "Fors Clavigera," Lett. 22.

[2] The term "Christian Socialism" first appeared as the title of a letter in the *New Moral World* of November 7, 1840, signed Jos. Squiers, who dated from Thomas Street Infant School, Coventry, October 26, 1840. But there were several societies of "Christian Co-operators" about 1830.

for a time as a "sentimental" question, yet it must be owned that it greatly improved the general reputation of social ideas, and helped to divest them of the "wickedness" at first held to be associated with them. Since that day social science [1] has been accepted as a substitute for Socialism, and now there is a disposition to try sociology, which sounds innocent and learned. In party warfare some good words, like some good persons, get banished and pass as it were a generation in exile. Then there arise persons who, knowing nothing or caring nothing for the old hateful controversial connotations of the word, are struck by its simple fitness, and recall it. Schemes, like words and persons, undergo a similar fate. The Labour Exchange is an instance of this.

In due course there appeared tracts on "Christian Socialism." The first was a dialogue between "A Person of Respectability" and "Nobody the Writer." "Nobody," however, conducts his argument quite as vigorously as though he was somebody. He maintains that any one who recognises the principles of Co-operation as stronger and truer than that of competition is rightly called a "Socialist," and admitted that the followers of Owen, Fourier, Louis Blanc, and others came under this definition.

Mr. E. V. Neale wrote the first "Handbook for Co-operators," which he gave me, free of conditions, to publish at the Fleet Street House for their use. His works and papers have been very numerous on co-operative subjects. As the General Secretary of the Central Board his legal knowledge has been of great value to the body. Indeed, the co-operators years ago always spoke of him with regard and pride as "their lawyer." Mr. Neale promoted industrial association with munificent trustfulness, and is remarkable among his eminent colleagues for his perception of co-operative principle and for the fertility of the applications he has devised.

[1] Mr. William Ellis having been mentioned in the *Times* as the founder of social science, he explained (1873) that "fifty years ago it was my good fortune to be introduced to Mr. James Mill, and through him to his son, John Stuart Mill, to both of whom I am indebted for more than I can find words to express. They set me thinking for myself. One result of my studies and reflections has been the deep conviction that the elementary truths of social science—founded long before I was born—ought to be taught in all our schools; and for more than twenty-five years I have employed the greater part of the time which I could spare from business to promote such teaching, both as a teacher and a writer of little books intended chiefly for children and their teachers."

A paper by J. M. Ludlow, on "Trade Societies and Co-operative Production," was read in 1867 at the Industrial Partnership's Conference in Manchester. Another publication by Mr. Ludlow in 1870 was upon "Co-operative Banking," described as "written at the request of Mr. Abram Greenwood," and read by Mr. W. Nuttall at the Co-operative Conference held at Bury in that year. Mr. Ludlow, like Mr. Neale and Mr. Hughes, has written much on special co-operative questions, upon which, without legal knowledge, no one could write usefully. It was a great gratification to the societies, Co-operative and Friendly, when Mr. Ludlow succeeded Mr. Tidd Pratt as Registrar. Mr. Tidd Pratt is held in honourable remembrance for his patience and solicitude in promoting the soundness of the institutions in his charge, though he had never been personally interested in their welfare like Mr. Ludlow.

Previous to 1850 there appeared a series of "Tracts by Christian Socialists." The most remarkable was the tract by Parson Lot, entitled "Cheap Clothes and Nasty," whose vigorous pen never failed to call attention to any subject which he treated. All these publications sought to compass the same end—the social improvement of society. Their tone was so fair that any person might agree with their object without adopting their personal and peculiar views indicated upon other subjects. One tract explained the principles of the "Society for Promoting Working Men's Associations"; the object was defined as that of enabling the associates and their families to receive all the net profits arising from their labour, after they shall have had a just allowance for the work done by them. The only condition required was that the candidate for association must be of good reputation and a competent workman. It was prescribed that none of the associations connected with the general union shall ever be made the instruments or agents of political agitation.[1] The associates in their individual capacity were left at liberty to act in this matter as they pleased. A curious rule was to this effect—"The work shall not be disturbed by speculative discussion"; yet one of the

[1] This was prescribed in terror of the Chartist and other Franchise agitations, in which all workmen, good for anything at that time, took creditable interest.

tracts was a "Dialogue between A. & B.," two clergymen, "on the Doctrine of Circumstances as it Affects Priests and People," a subject which had often been discussed by the followers of Mr. Owen, not much to their social advantage. The subject included the greatest speculative question which had agitated the secularist portion of the working class for twenty years. It is a great merit to be noticed that the co-operators had the rare capacity of being teachable ; next to possessing knowledge is the faculty of appreciating sound direction when you get it. Without this, the progress which has been made had not been possible. In the earlier days of the movement there were scholars in it who lent many graces to its defence, but assiduity and completeness of service have been greater in later years among its educated "promoters."

The "Christian Socialists" were an entirely new force of opinion on the side of Co-operation. On the part of the earlier co-operators there was the genuine sentiment of morality, else they had never maintained the struggle they did against adverse fortune and unfriendly opinion. Defeated, they lost not hope ; treated as wild, they never abandoned their purpose, nor conceived permanent dislike of those from whose scorn they suffered. When loss and ruin came, when their hard-earned savings were gone, and they had, in old age, to begin again to save what they could, they abated not their trust that equity in industry would answer some day ; and none repined at what they had attempted at so much sacrifice. While these pages were being written grey-headed, feeble men came to the writer saying their loss had been a bad business ; but it brought no regret, and their last days were gladdened that they had helped against hope. There was a noble sense of rightness in all this. These men were mostly bad members of Churches, as far as formal and accepted belief went, but they were good members of humanity and truth according to their light. During the earlier period men and women—for women as well as men gave their all to the cause—when the day of life was past, and the decline came, and penury was left with the darkness; were cheered by the light of conscience and duty. Such devotion commands generous regard, and a sort of glory seems to linger over the places where their otherwise undistinguished graves are to be found.

Not less honour and regard are due to those gentlemen who, owning the Christian faith, and having the advantage of higher culture than befel the majority of the humble members of the movement, did not hesitate to risk the unpopularity of sympathy with their rightful aims, and made sacrifices greater in a pecuniary sense, in order that social equity might prevail in common life, and commerce be redeemed from fraud and the poor from precariousness. With wider knowledge — with exacter aim—they with patient and laborious attentiveness, incredible save to those who saw it daily—advanced step by step the great movement to stages of legality and security. Among these—though he came later into the field—Mr. Walter Morrison is to be numbered as not less distinguished for tireless and costly unrecorded services.

CHAPTER XXXVI

LATER LITERATURE AND LEADERS

"When Cain was driven from Jehovah's land
He wandered eastward, seeking some far strand,
Ruled by kind gods, . . .
Wild, joyous gods. . . .
He never had a doubt that such gods were,
He looked within, and saw them mirrored there."
MORRIS'S *Earthly Paradise*.

SOME of these pleasant gods must have remained about until later co-operative days. Anyhow, our story now carries us among persons who needed them. The later literature of this movement has been comparatively free from outbursts of the pioneer times. Very seldom now does a co-operative orator break out with Gray's bard—

"Visions of glory ! spare my aching sight."

They do. The modern speaker does not see visions of this sort anywhere about. Saner poets sing—

"Never think the victory won
Till through the gloomy shades the radiant SUN
Of KNOWLEDGE darts his night-dispelling beams."

We let that sun alone now. We think of certain societies with thousands of members which have no Education Fund. We meet with fewer instances of permanently eccentric agitators. Now and then one appears who digresses into oddity. After long intervals of coherency he will act as though Nature had left a little snuff in his brains, which sets his idea sneezing unawares, and he mistakes the convulsion for vigour of thought ; but as a rule enthusiasm is more equable as society has become more tolerant.

Every party has sins and errors enough of its own to answer for; but a co-operative movement has more to answer for, as it is the nursing-mother of individuality and freedom of action. Co-operation has not been worse off than other causes. What a wonderful orator was the late Lord Mayo when it fell to him to state the views of the Government! It was my lot to listen to him. To have nothing to say, and to take three hours and three-quarters in saying it, was a feat of oratory Demosthenes could never equal. To speak as though you were every minute going to stop, and yet never give over, was a miracle of elocution. Members listened till they lost the power of hearing. They went to dine; when they came back Mayo was still speaking. They went to the theatre; when they returned he was still at it. Some went to Brighton to dinner, and when they came back Mayo had not given over. Lord Mayo lives in men's memories as a marvel. At that time members of Parliament awoke in their sleep, thinking that Mayo was still speaking. Everybody liked the Irish Secretary personally, but nobody expected to be called upon to like him so long at one time. When he went out as Viceroy to India, every one knew there would be no more mutineers, for if his lordship made a speech to them they would disband long before it was half over.[1] Had co-operators had an orator of this stamp the public would never have heard the end of it.

It is difficult to separate, in some cases, the literature from the leader. Both services are entirely blended in some persons. The last of the world-makers who followed in the footsteps of Robert Owen was one Robert Pemberton. He announced his scheme as that of the "Happy Colony," and he fixed upon New Zealand as the place where it was to be founded. The New World, as he conceived it, was to be circular. More mechanical and horticultural than any other projector, he avoided altogether parallelogrammatic devices. He declared his system was deduced from the discovery of the true attributes of the human mind. He had the merit of being solicitous both about education and the arts, and

[1] When he was assassinated the only physician in that district in India happened to be Dr. King, the son of Dr. King, of Brighton, who rendered all the help possible to the dying Viceroy.

spent much money in publishing books which were never read, and in devising diagrams which were never examined.

I had the pleasure to receive from the son of Dr. King a volume of "Thoughts and Suggestions on the Teachings of Christ," which I believe is quite unknown among co-operators. A copy ought to be in their libraries, first, as a mark of respect to the old propagandist, next, because of its intrinsic interest. It is written with more vigour and vivacity of thought than was shown in the *Co-operator*, which he edited, and which first made him known beyond the South Coast. For sixty years Dr. King was an active propagandist of co-operative principle. Lady Byron left him in her will a sum of money, "hoping," as she said, "that it might be in part dedicated to the promulgation of those ideas which had given her so much pleasure and consolation." It was in accordance with her wish that he was at the time of his death engaged in preparing some of his papers for publication. The volume of which I speak contains a selection from his writings published at his express request, in the hope that it might afford to others the same pleasure his conversation and writings had done to Lady Byron.

In 1875 Pierre Henri Baume, of whose eccentricity the reader has seen an account, died at Douglas, Isle of Man. He was born at Marseilles in 1797, and at an early age was sent to a military college at Naples, where he became private secretary to King Ferdinand. About the year 1825 he came to London. After being a preacher of Optimism, he became manager of a theatrical company, and subsequently by privation and calculation he amassed a considerable fortune, and bought land at Copenhagen Fields, London, and at Colney Hatch, together with a small estate in Buckinghamshire. After living about a quarter of a century in London he went to Manchester, and engaged in a movement to establish "public-houses without drink." He also instituted Sunday afternoon lectures to working men, which were carried on with varying success for several years. In 1857 he settled in the Isle of Man, and purchased an estate there. At Douglas he fitted up an odd kind of residence, the entrance to which he made almost inaccessible, and admission to which could only be obtained by those whom he had initiated into a peculiar knock.

In this little den he lived like a hermit, sleeping in a hammock slung from the roof, for the room was so crowded with dusty books that there was no space left for a bedstead, or even for a table on which to take his food. He resided in this place for several years, but his decease occurred at a tradesman's house in Duke Street, Douglas. In 1870 proceedings were taken by him to evict a number of squatters who had located themselves on his Colney Hatch property, which became known as "The Frenchman's Farm," as his former place at Copenhagen Fields was called the "Frenchman's Island." In 1832 M. Baume took out letters of naturalisation. He left the whole of his real and personal property, valued at £54,000, in trust for perplexing purposes never realised in the Isle of Man.

Some persons are deemed eccentric because they have some peculiarity, or because they differ from others in some conspicuous way. Whereas Mr. Baume seemed to have every peculiarity and to differ from everybody in every way. Though born in France, he began his career as secretary to King Ferdinand of Naples, and doubtless one or other of his parents was Neapolitan, for he had all the subtlety of the Italian and more than the suspicion of the Frenchman. Those who had earliest experience of him regarded him as a Neapolitan spy gone mad of suspicion. He must have been a most dangerous man if employed in that capacity. He would be always reporting plots, for he believed in them. He spent a part of his time in correspondence. His furtive mode was to send letters written on a half sheet of paper ready directed to himself and folded, to be returned to him. His part of the writing would abound in small capitals and underscored words, every sentence being written in the most careful manner in thick, black characters as legible as print. Each paragraph would be numbered and consist of questions concerning somebody of a most circumstantial and often most compromising character. A broad margin was left by the side of his writing for the information he desired, so that he might have his question and the reply returnable to him in the form of complete evidence. The only protection of those who wrote to him was to return the paper unsigned and have the answers filled in by another hand, and the replies composed on the plan often adopted by

certain ministers in Parliament, who, with great parade of candour, circumstance, and emphasis, answer the questioner without telling him anything. This was the precaution I took. The Baume correspondence with publicists of every class carefully filed by him must by the time of his death be sufficient to fill several houses. And if he has bequeathed it with his other property to the Isle of Man, a curious posterity will find wonderful entertainment some day.[1] His favourite mode of living in London was to lodge in a coffee-house, to which he would bring in a cart the peculiar bedroom conveniences necessary for himself (and the boy whom he reared), the articles being in a state of exposure, which excited the merriment of the whole neighbourhood. His mysterious ways as a lodger, and his frantic mode of running in and out of the house in all manner of disguises, soon alarmed the family, and his excited conduct in the coffee-room soon frightened away the customers. He would often try to get rooms in the private house of a Socialist lecturer, and his ingenuity was such that it was very difficult to prevent him ; and if he once got in, it was far more difficult to get him out. His practice was to display a bundle of halves of banknotes, or bonds, making a show of wealth which tempted people of narrow means to put up with his ways in the expectation he might be useful to them, of which there was not the slightest chance. His banknotes were always in halves, and useless if lost—he was very circumspect in these matters. He was, after his kind, the greatest philanthropic impostor abroad, not in a conscious way, so much as in consequence of his manner of mind. Like many other benefactors he wanted the credit of giving without ceasing to hold. He had an honest craze for social and educational projects, and during his long life he was allured by them only. He had a suspicion, which never left him, that everybody was conspiring against him, and wanted to get possession of his money or some advantage over him. And he had as constant a conviction, very honourable of its kind, that it was a man's duty to resist injustice and knavery, and he would really make great sacrifices to defeat it. His misfortune

[1] No audited account was made public of the amount realised by his property, nor any details given of who appropriated it, or what was expended for the public benefit.

was that he never distinguished between knaves and honest men, but suspected them all alike. The only persons he seemed to regard without distrust were those who never asked his co-operation in any work of theirs. Those who were so artless as to think he might do something useful, and began to give attention to his schemes, he put to more trouble and expense than all his money was worth, and ended by laying down such impossible conditions of action that they ultimately turned away in weariness and contempt. There could not have been a greater calamity to any struggling movement than that Mr. Baume should take an interest in it. A man of irregular ability, considerable knowledge, great courage and audacity, an eloquent speaker, a voice of contagious force, an impassioned manner, handsome as he was, and opulent as he always gave himself out to be, he easily obtained ascendancy in working-class meetings. His boldness, his fire, his fertility of purposes naturally influenced those who knew nothing, and had nothing of their own but expectations. His abstemiousness of habit, which not only never diverged into indulgence —it seemed never to digress into sufficiency—lent an air of sincerity to his professions. He lived as though his object was to show upon how little a man could subsist, and in this way he maintained a vigorous activity until his seventy-eighth year.

In popular assemblies, where the right of the platform was given to all who entered, he could neither be repressed nor suppressed, nor without difficulty put down. When he once got influence in a society he seemed never to require sleep or rest. He was there the earliest and the latest, and at all intermediate times. As ready with his pen as his tongue, he drew innumerable placards, abounding in astonishing statements which struck the public in Manchester like a loose mill band, making them smart with rage and derision. He stuck his placards on doors and windows, and made the society he infested the ridicule and terror of the district. Mr. Owen reasonably taught that the sympathies of ordinary people were too confined, and ought to be extended to their neighbours. Mr. Baume brought sharp ridicule upon the wise sentiment by proposing that the mothers should suckle their children through an aperture in a metal plate, through which the mother was to place the nipple of her breast ; the child was to

suckle on the other side, thus concealing the child and parent from each other, lest filial and maternal ties should frustrate the universal sympathies which were to be cultivated. The misfortune to the mother was, that as she could never see the tender face of her offspring, she could not be sure whether the right baby came to the aperture. But this detail did not trouble the mechanical philanthropist. A man so disastrously ingenious should have been shipped back to King Ferdinand of Naples without delay. It is wonderful that any wise and merciful scheme of improvement of social life ever gets public acceptance, seeing how many doors a popular cause leaves open for wild partisans to enter and ruin it.

Yet Baume's courage and subtlety could not fail to make him sometimes useful. Julian Hibbert, mentioned before, was rich, scholarly, and retiring. Between him and Baume, both being men of fortune, there existed the friendship of equals. Holding proscribed opinions, the fearless companionship of Baume was interesting to Hibbert; Hibbert subsequently met his death through the public indignity put upon him by Mr. Commissioner Phillips, an Irish barrister at the criminal bar. At his death he requested his friend Baume to take care that his skull was preserved for phrenological purposes. Phrenology was then a discovery of great interest, and Hibbert, having respect for the teaching of Spurzheim, wished to add to its illustrations at a time when a popular dread of dissection put impediment in the way of physiological and mental science. Hibbert's family being wealthy, and not sharing his intrepidity and love of new thought, determined to avoid this, and had the body removed at night to an undertaker's in Holborn. By what subtlety of watchfulness and disguises by day and by night Baume fulfilled his friend's injunction were never known. But his head found its way to the museum of Mr. Devonshire Saull. When the hearse arrived at night to convey Hibbert's remains away, the undertaker on the box discovered a mute on the hearse more than he had provided. His long cloak and hatband resembled the others, and it was only by getting sight of the glittering eye of the additional attendant that he became aware of a supernumerary being with him. It is said he drove with alarm, imagining some supernatural being had entered his employ.

When the burial party assembled in church, and the family mourners stood round the bier by torchlight—for his burial took place in the night—they were astounded to see Mr. Baume uncover his head, witnessing the last rites over the remains of his valued friend. It was remembering this, when Robert Owen was buried at Newtown, that made Mr. Rigby take precautions [1] in putting furze bushes in the grave, to prevent access to the coffin, and remaining by it until I went to relieve him at midnight, lest in some mysterious way Mr. Baume should appear in that lonely churchyard, impelled by some fanaticism for science, where he had no known authority to interfere. I shared none of Mr. Rigby's alarm, but I took his place as watch to satisfy his apprehension.

Only two or three years before Baume's death deeds were drawn up by which his property was to pass into the hands of the Manchester co-operators. Mr. W. Nuttall mainly negotiated the matter. Complicated arrangements proposed by Baume were of the old pretentious and impossible kind. The deeds were never completed, and, as everybody expected, when death obliged him to relinquish his hold of his property, it would fall into the hands of people alien to his sympathies and his projects, rather than to that party whose objects he had cherished in his mind for fifty years, who had borne with him, who alone cared for him, despite his eccentricities, and who would have preserved his memory with some honour and distinction by carrying out, in his name, the sensible part of his ideas. A book might be written on the Idiots of Progress.

One who attended to everything in his time, namely, James Silk Buckingham, certainly deserves mention as being the author of a large volume, in which he proposed and described a Model Town Association. Mr. Buckingham was some time member for Sheffield, but before that he had travelled everywhere, and had written in favour of more schemes of improvement than any other man save Mr. Bridges Adams. Long before he closed his fertile career he was known to have written eighty volumes. Though devoid of originality, he had an amazing faculty for understanding every scheme of improvement made known, and had the art of presenting it in the most unobjectionable, agreeable, and—uninteresting way.

[1] Related vol. i.

Everybody approved of what he said, but never took further notice of it. He travelled through the most unwholesome climes, and preserved his health by inflexible temperance. He performed a prodigious amount of work without any apparent fatigue. He had a commanding presence, a pleasing voice, and a limitless fluency of speech. He had the sagacity to foresee the coming improvements of civilisation, and advocated them before the public saw their significance. Upon most subjects he gathered together all the authorities who had consciously or unconsciously favoured the project he discussed, and many historians might look into his forgotten books for information that might be long sought in vain elsewhere. He greatly improved his readers and his hearers in his time, but the silk in his name was in his nature, and in his manners; and the gratitude of the public has slidden over his memory by reason of the smoothness of his influence. A useful catalogue might be made of the number of projects which he advocated and which were realised during his life and since, for which he was ridiculed for proposing. His "Model Town" was entered by eight avenues, to which he gave the names of Unity, Concord, Fortitude, Charity, Peace, Hope, Justice, and Faith. It was this mixture of spiritual fancy with practical ideas that led the public to distrust him—not being sufficiently interested in his project to look at them discerningly.[1]

Most men who were attracted by Mr. Owen were men who had done something, or were capable of doing something. One of them was William Farquhar. The best steel engraving of Mr. Owen—the one in which he appeared most like a gentleman and philosopher—was executed at the cost of Mr. Farquhar, as a tribute of his regard. He claimed to be the real inventor of the Universal Under Water Propeller, subsequently patented by Lieutenant Carpenter, R.N. The circumstantial account he published of his invention, the spot at the London Docks where it first occurred to him, and his exhibition of it by desire of Admiral Sir Arthur Farquhar, were proofs of the paternity of the idea. Lieutenant Carpenter, who was in the room, had a model of a gun brig

[1] I attended in Sheffield a public lecture by Mr. Buckingham—when I was a Social Missionary there—controverting a passage in it. I afterwards wrote a letter in a Sheffield paper, which Mr. Buckingham reprinted in one of his books at that time.

with him, which the Admiral declared to be fruitless. The lieutenant was disheartened and took his model to a side table; William Farquhar followed him in sympathy, and pointed out exactly what was wanted. He said the idea never occurred to him, and shortly after patented it in very nearly the same words William Farquhar had described his plan of an under-water propeller. It was a curious instance of the generous incaution of an inventor.

In 1847 Mr. T. W. Thornton, a young English gentleman who lived upon a small fortune in Paris, published in French a life of Robert Owen, with an exposition of his social principles, which Mr. Thornton well understood. It was his custom to translate some of the most striking social papers on social subjects, which appeared in the French press, for publications in journals in England reaching the working class interested in such subjects. Original papers of his own, marked by much accurate thought, appeared in the early volumes of the *Reasoner*. He had given promise of a career of much usefulness, when he perished by cholera in Paris in 1849.

There has been Dr. Henry Travis, heretofore named, one of those remarkable figures who sometimes appear on the boundary of a new movement, gliding silently about, bearing the burden of a secret not vouchsafed to him, nor confided to him, but possessed by him—that secret is what Mr. Owen meant by his system. Mr. Owen did not understand himself, that is quite clear to Dr. Travis' mind, who has published elaborate volumes to prove it. He also demonstrates, in his way, that no one else ever understood the founder's idea. Dr. Travis avers that Mr. Owen used to say that he was not understood by any of his disciples or opponents. If that were so, how came Dr. Travis to understand him? He has told us[1] that the daughter of a baronet, who paid great attention to Mr. Owen's conversation, came to the conclusion that Mr. Owen could not explain himself. By what process, then, are we to understand that Dr. Travis understood him? By what transformation of genius did the disciple become master? The doctor tells us Mr. Owen's "teaching" has been so "defective" as to "produce the failure of all who have endeavoured to understand him." If everybody has failed, Dr.

[1] *Co-operative News*, October 16, 1875.

Travis must have failed, unless he is that singular and extremely isolated person, separate and outside everybody! What Mr. Owen really said was, "I do not know if I have made one disciple who fully comprehends the import of the change which I so much desire to impress on the minds, and for the practice of all."[1] Dr. Travis quotes this passage, without seeing its "import" himself. It does not mean that Mr. Owen's disciples did not understand the principle of his system, but that they did not "fully understand its import" in practice as conceived by himself, who had thought about it the longest, and thought about it the most. The principles of Mr. Owen were few and simple. They were that material circumstances were indefinitely influential on human character. That every man is what he has mainly been made to be, by the circumstances which preceded his birth and which have operated upon him since. Therefore the most available method of improvement is to put him under better circumstances; and if we cannot make him what we wish, we should rather compassionate than hate him, on account of the natural disadvantage from which he suffers.

These principles Mr. Owen did explain very well. These principles his disciples very well understood. These principles society has very widely perceived to be true, and has accepted to a degree which has exceeded the expectation of the most sanguine of his adherents. But this is a very different thing to perceiving, as the master perceived, all the applications of them, and all the changes that might be made in society to realise their "full" import. Great discoverers in science commonly foresee greater changes that may result from the adoption of the new thing they have introduced, than any of their contemporaries, though thousands of observers perfectly understand the thing itself. The law of gravitation, the circulation of the blood, the invention of travelling by steam, are all familiar instances. Common people at once understood the nature of these additions to human knowledge and power, and it will be erroneous to say that the originators were not understood by their followers, because these originators saw with a keener glance, and throughout a wider range, the application of their discoveries. It is creditable to Dr. Travis

[1] *Millennium Gazette*, October, 1856.

that he should succeed in improving the master's statement of his principle, or extending his discoveries. But it is an error of grace or gratitude to disparage the teacher or make him appear ridiculous by representing him as incapable of educating a single disciple to understand him. Next to Charles Bray, Dr. Travis is the most important writer who expounds Mr. Owen's views, upon the authority of long personal intimacy with him. In the Pioneer period of Co-operation Dr. Travis was an active and much regarded officer of that adventurous movement. But during a long period of years, which elapsed during its slow revival, he was seldom seen. We regarded him as an enthusiast without enthusiasm. Among those who rekindled the fire upon the old altar he was no longer prominent. He was not discernible amongst those who fanned the spark not quite extinguished. His voice was not heard in cheering the thin curls of ascending smoke, which surely indicated the coming flame. But when the pile is increased, and the fire is conspicuous in the world, and thousands of devotees stand around, the doctor reappears as the lost High Priest, proclaiming himself without misgiving as the master of the master. Nevertheless Dr. Travis was one of the few philosophers who studied the theory of Socialism and introduced the term Determinism into its discussions.

Mr. Max Kyllman, a young German merchant who resided in Manchester, rendered generous assistance to the co-operative, as he did to other movements. Like many other German gentlemen, he had a passion for promoting public improvement beyond that which Englishmen ordinarily display. Germans seem to regard the promotion of liberal principles as well understood self-defence.

Colonel Henry Clinton, of Royston, Herts, published several very interesting pamphlets upon the scientific and social arrangements of households, to which he gave the genial name of "Associated Homes." The devisor differed from Mr. Owen, and most others who have proposed social schemes, in maintaining the separate family system. Since this author first wrote, several schemes of the same kind have been devised, less comprehensive in spirit and detail than his. Colonel Clinton had a reasonable respect for all the human

race except the Americans, who defeated his grandfather, General Lord Clinton. But Colonel Clinton's amusing disapproval of the Americans does not prevent him giving generous aid to many social and literary projects by which they may benefit.

Professor V. A. Huber, of Wernigerode, died July 19, 1869. He was regarded as the father of Co-operation in Germany, and no man was considered to have done so much as he to circulate a knowledge of English co-operative effort in that country. In his own land he is said to have stood aloof from all parties. This has been a peculiarity of other eminent co-operators. A man must be intolerably wise who perceives that all his countrymen are in the wrong on everything, or intolerably dainty if there is no movement immaculate enough for him to touch or help on the way to usefulness. English Co-operation must have been very good or very fortunate to have interested him.

Mr. William Lovett died in London in 1877. He was a leading co-operator in the metropolis when that party first arose, and the greatest Radical secretary of the working class. Mr. Lovett observed everything and kept record of everything political. He wrote resolutions, petitions, manifestoes, remonstances, and kept notes of interviews and councils at which eminent politicians of the time took part. He was the first person who drew up and sent to Parliament a petition for opening the British Museum and Art Galleries on Sunday. Its prayer, creditable, just, and useful, was not complied with at the end of fifty years after it was made. No statesman can say that progress proceeds in England in any reckless celerity. Late in life Mr. Lovett wrote the story of his career since he came, a Cornish youth, to London in 1821. It is the most documentary and interesting narrative of Radical days, written by an actor in them. William Lovett excelled the average of the working class in intelligence, in probity—and suspicion. He was distinguished alike by integrity of principle and mistrust. In politics he was a Radical irreconcilable. Yet he steadfastly sought to promote political ends by popular intelligence. Excepting in political transactions, he appears to have kept no records, and when he wrote in later life from impressions of earlier years, he was often inaccurate. In his

last work he made some statements of Robert Owen's views of marriage in communities—the like of which had never been known to any of his adherents. I reprinted them during Mr. Lovett's life-time, pointing out the manifest contradictions involved in his own narrative, and sent them to him, and also to his nearest friends, requesting his answer concerning them, lest after his death they might acquire importance from the authority of his name. But as he never made any answer it may be presumed that in that particular his statements were not capable of confirmation. At his burial (which took place in his 78th year) at Highgate, London, in August, 1877, I spoke at his grave on behalf of distant co-operators who held him in regard, testifying that as far back as 1821, when advocates of the people cared, some for political and some for social advocacy, it was a distinction of Mr. Lovett that he cared for both. He has been mentioned as the keeper of the Greville Street Store, London, in 1828. It was one of the distinctions of Mr. Lovett that it was his hand which first drew the People's Charter, which the pen of Mr. Roebuck revised. Mr. Lovett was imprisoned in Warwick Goal in 1839. When in prison he wrote the first book on Chartism which associated that movement with the intelligence of the people. I well remember the dreary hopelessness of political advocacy in those days and many years afterwards. At public meetings the same people seemed always to be present, and I knew their faces by heart. It seems wonderful now that the humble arguments they employed should ever have radiated from those meetings into cabinets, and that their claims should have come to be conceded. They looked forward to the glamour of a final conflict, and the splendour of a great concession, when it came to pass that all they claimed was given almost without their being aware of it, and with an air of reproach that they had made so much to do about what everybody was agreed upon. Under the friendship of Mr. W. Ellis, Mr. Lovett had devoted the latter years of his life to promoting secular education among the working class. He gave influence to his principles by his character, independence, intelligence, and integrity. He advanced his principles by his life as much as by his labours.

Robert Dale Owen died in America in 1877. He always

retained a liking for the Indiana settlement. He said that he hoped his children would always be connected with it. Robert Dale Owen had a great career in America in promoting enfranchisement of women, and a document he submitted to Abraham Lincoln influenced him more than any other in issuing a proclamation in favour of the slaves. (See correspondence of the Owen family and letter of his daughter, Mrs. Rosamond Owen Templeton, *Co-operative News*, January, 1904.) Mrs. Chappellsmith, of Indiana, was formerly the Miss Reynolds known to the Socialists of London in the period between 1835 and 1841, as an eloquent and accomplished lady who delivered public lectures in favour of their views.

American papers, who best know the facts concerning Robert Dale Owen, explain that he had suffered from excitement of the brain, ascribed to overwork in his youth. He was a man of singular moral courage, and to the end of his days he maintained the reputation of great candour. As soon as he found he was deceived by Katie King, the Spiritist, he published a card and said so, and warned people not to believe what he had said about that fascinating impostor. A man of less courage would have said nothing, in the hope that the public would the sooner forget it. It is clear that spiritism did not affect his mind although he presented gold rings to pretty feminine spirits. In his delirious days he fancied himself the Marquis of Breadalbane, and proposed coming over to Scotland to take possession of his estates. He had a great scheme for recasting the art of war by raising armies of gentlemen only, and proposing himself to go to the East and settle things there on a very superior plan. He believed himself in possession of extraordinary powers of riding and fighting, and had a number of amusing illusions. But he was not a common madman; he was mad like a philosopher—he had a picturesque insanity. After he had charmed his friends by his odd speculations, he would spend days in analysing them, and wondering how they arose in his mind. He very coolly and skilfully dissected his own crazes. The activity of the brain had become uncontrollable; still his was a very superior kind of aberration. Robert Dale Owen entirely recovered and remained himself to the end of his days. He was a graceful writer, of lightness

and imagination—a species of Washington Irving among publicists.

In 1848–9 the *Spirit of the Age* newspaper was issued, projected by Robert Buchanan, Alexander Campbell, and Lloyd Jones. When they no longer were able to sustain it, "Mr. Edward Search," the trusted legal adviser of Mr. Owen, undertook to continue it, and I became the editor of it. For three months the projectors of the paper were retained upon it from consideration for them.[1] Mr. Search believed that a good literary social newspaper might be established, if conducted with equal fairness towards the middle class and the industrious class, whom it was designed to benefit. Arrangements were made with new writers, and there was at last prospect of a real newspaper of general interest. The projectors of the paper, however, desired to see it conducted in their way, and Mr. Lloyd Jones led the hostility to it, and wrote a disparaging letter in the last number over which his friends could exercise the right of inserting it. The *Spirit of the Age* had been bought in the hope of rescuing co-operative journalism from its insipidity and precariousness—then well apparent. As public support was then very limited, there was small prospect of establishing such a newspaper when a hostile one was announced to be immediately started by the first proprietors of the *Spirit of the Age*. I therefore saw it was my duty to advise Mr. Search that he would lose all further money he had arranged to devote to the journal he had bought, and that it was better to consider as wholly lost the £600 he had generously spent. And thus I relinquished an appointment which I valued more than any I had ever held. So the *Spirit of the Age* ceased. There has been no journal since like that which was then organised, and which might have been established, had co-operation been possible then among co-operators. The most eminent representatives of social movements in the chief European nations would have written in its pages. The last number of the *Spirit of the Age* contained the following announcement from the pen of Mr. Search :—

[1] My advice to Mr. Search was—pay them their three months' salaries and be quit of them. By retaining them they would have the power of destroying his paper, which they did.

"It is due to our readers to inform them that with this number the *Spirit of the Age* ceases. He who took to the paper at No. 18, and defrayed the entire of its liabilities, has since sustained it, to see whether an addition of quantity, more care in superintendence, and a well-considered devotion to the interests of those whose views the paper was intended to advance, would obtain for it that support which would give it an independent existence. During three months the experiment has been tried. Three months has been a short period of trial; and, money not being essentially important, the experiment would have been continued longer; but the receipt of Mr. Jones's letter, which will be seen in another part of this paper, has confirmed a fact previously entertained, that unless the *Spirit of the Age* was continued in precisely the same tone and style under which it had arrived at death's door, it would not be satisfactory to those who had originally issued it. It seemed, therefore, unwise to seek to give currency to views of which his letter shows we were, in the opinion of those who sought our aid, not satisfactory exponents. To continue this experiment under the same title would, it is evident, subject us to imputations which we would much rather avoid, by sacrificing the money which has been expended. And on the receipt of Mr. Jones's letter we found that the propriety of the resolution we had come to was at once established. For the sake of the cause itself, we deeply regret this want of accordancy with the views of management, and of the tone in which it was desired our advocacy should be conducted. Our own views are that just ends should be sought, and ought to be sought, by peaceable means. But the difference between us seems to be this, that the parties who launched this paper do not consider that peaceable and gentle-toned language is a necessary condition of the means of progress. All subscribers to the *Spirit of the Age* who have paid their subscriptions in advance, will receive the residue of the subscriptions due to them."

Scotland has had its co-operative papers as well as England. The *Scottish Co-operator*, edited by Mr. J. McInnes, was a small, neatly-printed, well-looking periodical, always clearly and sensibly written. Scotland has now a *Scottish Co-operator*

published weekly, often having illustrations like the English *Co-operative News*. Mr. McInnes also edited the Handbook of Co-operation of the Scottish Wholesale Society, in which the subjects selected were practical, various, and stated with great clearness and relevance.

English co-operative stores have at different times issued a small halfpenny or free journal, giving a monthly account of their proceedings, with a view to increase local information concerning them. Mr. Butcher projected one in Banbury. One was issued at Leicester, and others at Derby, Leeds, and Ipswich. There was the *South of England Pioneer*, edited by Mr. W. P. Carter, of Worthing. Quite a series have been devised in London for the use of the Metropolitan Society and stores of the South. One of the tracts published in Banbury contained a dialogue between a stranger and a member of the store, bearing the pleasant name of John Joyful. Co-operators always turn up cheerful.

In the Constructive period disagreeable writers have been few, and one sample of them will suffice. Mr. John Hill Burton's book on political and social economy, published by Chambers, though containing on the whole excellent advice to those whom it concerned, is as offensive to co-operators as a book can well be. The impression left on the mind of the reader is that every person, from Plato to Louis Blanc, who thought that society might be improved by mitigating competition, were not merely fools, but fools of so hopeless an order that reasoning with them was to reduce yourself to their level. For a people so fond of writing and so wonderfully gifted with the desire of expressing their opinions as the Scotch, we had scant contributions to co-operative literature. Were any one asked to name a nation with whose people Co-operation would be most congenial and most successful, they would first of all name Scotland. They are clannish, prudent, sagacious, calculating, and persevering. Of the daring which comes from duty and is inspired by duty they have much, but the daring of self-regardless impulse they have less than the English, who have far less than the Irish. Prudence is in the nature in Scotchmen; many wait to see whether a thing succeeds before they join it; and as success in Co-operation depends upon the concurrent

action of numbers, Scotch success has been slow. Yet in unexpected qualities the Scotch excel. They are masters in hospitality. An Englishman is pretty generous on impulse, on the whole more spontaneous; but he is liable to look back on what he does, and be of opinion that he has gone too far. A Scot is not so impulsive; but when he gives it is with his understanding and his heart, and he never looks back.

Co-operation has found its way to the Antipodes long ago. Mr. Charles Frederick Nichols, formerly an active member of the social propaganda in London, and since an active writer in Australia, has published several small works. "The Rise and Progress of Quartz Mining in Clunes" is one in which he advocated the introduction of the co-operative principle in the gold-fields of Australia. There was considerable prejudice to overcome in Melbourne (Englishmen when they emigrate carefully carry their prejudices with them) before a co-operative store was opened. But in 1872 one was commenced which had 200 members; and a Conference was contemplated of all those in the colony favourable to social concert among the people.

Many works have been written since 1844 illustrative of co-operative ideas. Edmund About, in France, wrote a Handbook of Social Economy, or the Worker's A, B, C. Among many eminent writers in England Professor F. W. Newman and Professor Thorold Rogers have written upon the question. Professor Hodgson, Professor Fawcett, and Mr. Thomas Brassey, M.P., have contributed books, papers, and addresses upon it. Mr. (since Lord) Brassey has published a work on "Co-operative Production," an indication that co-operative workmen have practical counsellors now, unknown in earlier years. His facts are drawn from sources of authority in England and on the Continent, and interpreted as only one familiar with great commercial undertakings could interpret them.[1]

Lord Brassey's father was an eminent friend of Co-operation, who promoted it practically by his example in his great business undertakings. He had not only Co-operation, but the true co-operative spirit in his mind. Sir Arthur

[1] Lord Brassey's volume, "Lectures on the Labour Question," contain information and suggestions of great value to students of commercial and productive Co-operation.

Helps, in the dedication of his "Life of Thomas Brassey" to the Queen, says: "Your Majesty will find that the late Mr. Brassey was an employer of labour after your Majesty's own heart, always solicitous for the welfare of those who served under him; never keeping aloof from them, but using the powerful position of a master in such a manner as to win their affections and to diminish the distance, which is often far too great between the employer and the employed." In recounting the facts of his life Sir Arthur says: "Mr. Brassey favoured and furthered the co-operative system; constantly giving a certain share of the profits to his agents, and thus making them partakers in the success or failure of the enterprise."[1]

One of the social advocates, of considerable activity in his day, was Mr. Robert Cooper. He had zeal and oratorical ambition, which was a merit so far as it showed care to render the manner of his lectures acceptable. Though he had incurred no peril he fared better than those who had. Mr. Fletcher, of Kennington, had given me his fortune, at that time £30,000, and for two years left his will in my possession. In those days inflation, coarseness, and fierceness of advocacy, which deterred the best inquirers from looking at your principles, were regarded as signs of spirit, and Mr. Fletcher, who was of that way of thinking, was told that I did not much encourage books with those characteristics at my publishing house in Fleet Street; he asked for his will, and making a new one gave it to Mr. Cooper in my presence, when we were at tea together one evening at his house. Mr. Fletcher died suddenly before I had knowledge of what had been said to him, or opportunity of explaining to him that now we had won freedom, the success of truth depended henceforth very much upon consideration, temper, and fairness in statement. And so I lost the only fortune that ever came near to me, and I should have regretted it had it not occurred in the course of doing what I thought right.[2]

[1] "Life of Thomas Brassey," chap. iii. p. 51.

[2] In my employ I had a confidential manager who appropriated £112 of money entrusted to him. Thinking the needs of his family had been his temptation, I did not prosecute him, but assisted him to another situation, not of a fiduciary kind. I found out afterwards that he had told Mr. Fletcher that I "impeded the publication of Mr. Cooper's works, whereas I had specially instructed him (the manager) to do all in his power to promote them.

Of the lost Pioneers, Mr. Henry Hetherington, was among the projectors of the first London Co-operative Printers' Society of 1821. He was the foremost defender of the unstamped press, and his journal, the *Poor Man's Guardian*, which gave him his public name, was prosecuted 150 times before Lord Lyndhurst declared it to be a strictly legal publication. The Government were slow in those days in making things out. Hetherington died of cholera in 1849 at 37, Judd Street, London. A long procession filled the New Road as we conveyed him to Kensal Green. More than 2,000 surrounded the grave, where I delivered the oration, which afterwards appeared in the "Logic of Death," of which more than 100,000 have been sold.

The next grave I spoke at was that of Mrs. Emma Martin, who incurred more dangers than any other lady who spoke on social platforms. The address on her burial was reported in the *Leader* newspaper of 1854. It was the first time any metropolitan newspaper had accorded that kind of notice.[1]

Mightier names which have lent friendly influences and advocacy to the cause of industrial improvement, have since gone through the pass of death. One will occur to every co-operator—Canon Kingsley. No one was more resolute in maintaining his own opinions than he, and no one was more considerate in the judgment of opinions opposed to his own. The last time we met he asked me to come and see him, when in residency at Westminster, and observed, "The world is very different now from what it was when you and I commenced trying to improve it twenty-five years ago." There was no ground for taking me into comparison with himself, but it was done in that hearty courtesy which attached co-operators to him, even where some of us dissented from views he cherished. We all owe gratitude to his memory for great services. In no way could it profit him to befriend us, and therefore his civility was to us as a sign of sincerity.

[1] It was this address which alarmed the Rev. Dr. Jelf, who alarmed Mr. Maurice, who alarmed Canon Kingsley, who brought an incredible charge against the *Leader*. See "Sixty Years of an Agitator's Life," vol. i. p. 241.

CHAPTER XXXVII

THE TEN CONGRESSES

"We ought to resolve the economical problem, not by means of an antagonism of class against class; not by means of a war of workmen and of resistance, whose only end is a decrease of production and of cheapness; not by means of displacement of capital which does not increase the amount of social richness; not by the systems practised among foreigners, which violate property, the source of all emulation, liberty, and labour; but by means of creating new sources of capital, of production and consumption, causing them to pass through the hands of the operatives' voluntary associations, that the fruits of labour may constitute their property."—GIUSEPPE MAZZINI, Address to the Operatives of Parma (1861).

THIS comprehensive summary of co-operative policy exactly describes the procedure and progress gradually accomplished in successive degrees, at the ten Congresses of which we have now to give a brief account.

The Central Board have published every year during its existence closely-printed Reports of the annual Congress of the societies. Ten Reports have been issued.[1] They contain the addresses delivered by the presidents, who have mainly been men of distinction; the speeches of the delegates taking part in the debates; speeches delivered in the town at public meetings convened by the Congress; the papers read before the Congress; foreign correspondence with the leading promoters of Co-operation in other countries. These reports exhibit the life of Co-operation and its yearly progress in numbers, conception, administration, and application of its principles. Though the Reports are liberally circulated they are not kept in print, and thus become a species of lost literature of the most instructive kind a stranger can consult.

[1] In 1905 they amount to thirty-seven.

These annual reports, and the annual volumes of the *Co-operative News*, can be kept in every library of the stores, and every store ought to have a library to keep them in.

There have been three series of Congresses held in England within forty years—a Co-operative series, a Socialist series, and the present series commencing 1869. The first of the last series was held in London.

The following have been the Presidents of the Congresses and names of the towns in which they were held :—

1869. Thomas Hughes, M.P., London.
1870. Walter Morrison, M.P., Manchester.
1871. Hon. Auberon Herbert, M.P., Birmingham.
1872. Thomas Hughes, M.P., Bolton.
1873. Joseph Cowen, Jun.,[1] Newcastle-on-Tyne.
1874. Thomas Brassey M.P., Halifax.
1875. Prof. Thorold Rogers, London.
1876. Prof. Hodgson, LL.D., Glasgow.
1877. Hon. Auberon Herbert, Leicester.
1878. The Marquis of Ripon,[2] Manchester.

Mr. Thomas Hughes, M.P., was the president of the first Congress. He was one of the chief guides of the co-operative Israelites through the wilderness of lawlessness into the promised land of legality. From the Mount Pisgah on which he spoke he surveyed the long-sought kingdom of co-operative production, which we have not yet fully reached.

Among the visitors to the first Congress of 1869 were the Comte de Paris, Mr. G. Ripley, of the *New York Tribune*, the Hon. E. Lyulph Stanley, Mrs. Jacob Bright, Henry Fawcett, M.P.; Thomas Dixon Galpin, T. W. Thornton, Somerset Beaumont, M.P.; F. Crowe (H.B.M.'s Consul-General, Christiania, Norway), Sir Louis Mallet, Sir John Bowring, Colonel F. C. Maude, William Shaen, the Earl of Lichfield, and others.

Prof. Vigano, of Italy, contributed a paper to this Congress; and a co-operative society of 700 members, at Kharkof, sent M. Nicholas Balline as a delegate. On the list of names of the Arrangement Committee of the Congress was that of "Giuseppe Dolfi, a Florentine tradesman, who, more perhaps

[1] Afterwards M.P. for Newcastle-on-Tyne.
[2] The President on the second day was the Bishop of Manchester, and on the third day Dr. John Watts.

than any other single person, helped to turn out a sovereign Grand Duke, and remained a baker."[1] He was a promoter of the People's Bank and the Artisan Fraternity of Florence. There was an Exhibition of co-operative manufactures at this Congress, which has been repeated at subsequent Congresses.

The following list of names of the first Central Board of the Co-operators, which was appointed at the 1869 Congress, includes most of those who have been concerned in promoting the co-operative movement in the Constructive Period. Mr. Pare and Mr. Allen have since died :—

LONDON.

Thomas Hughes, M.P.
Walter Morrison, M.P.
Anthony J. Mundella, M.P.
Hon. Auberon Herbert, M.P.
Lloyd Jones.
William Allen, Secretary of the Amalgamated Engineers' Society.
Robert Applegarth, Secretary of the Amalgamated Carpenters and Joiners' Society.
Edward Owen Greening, Managing Director of Agricultural and Horticultural Co-operative Association.
James Hole, Secretary of the Association of Chambers of Commerce.
George Jacob Holyoake.
John Malcolm Ludlow.
E. Vansittart Neale.
William Pare, F.S.S.
Hodgson Pratt, Hon. Secretary of the Working Men's Club and Institute Union.
Henry Travis, M.D.
Joseph Woodin.

PROVINCIAL.

Abraham Greenwood, Rochdale.
Samuel Stott, Rochdale.
T. Cheetham, Rochdale.
William Nuttall, Oldham.
Isaiah Lee, Oldham.
James Challinor Fox, Manchester.
David Baxter, Manchester.
Thomas Slater, Bury.
James Crabtree, Heckmondwike.
J. Whittaker, Bacup.
W. Barnett, Macclesfield.
Joseph Kay, Over Darwen.
William Bates, Eccles.
J. T. McInnes, Glasgow, Editor of the *Scottish Co-operator*.
James Borrowman, Glasgow.

The Congress of 1870 was held in the Memorial Hall, Manchester. The practical business of Co-operation was advanced by it. Mr. Walter Morrison, M.P., delivered the opening address, which dealt with the state of Co-operation at home and abroad, and occupied little more than half an hour in delivery. Subsequent addresses have exceeded an hour. The example of Mr. Morrison was in the direction of desirable limitation. As a chairman of Congress Mr. Morrison excelled in the mastery of questions before it, of keeping them before it, of never relaxing his attention, and never suffering debate to loiter or diverge. Mr. Hibbert,

[1] Preface to Congress Report by J. M. Ludlow.

M.P., presided the third day. At this Congress, as at subsequent ones, during Mr. Pare's life, foreign delegates and foreign correspondence were features.

The Birmingham Congress of 1871 met in the committee-room of the Town Hall. The Hon. Auberon Herbert, M.P., was president. He spoke on the fidelity and moral passion which should characterise co-operators. Mr. Morrison, M.P., occupied the chair the third day. Mr. George Dixon, M.P., presided at the public meeting in the Town Hall. The *Daily Post* gave an article on the relation of Co-operation to the industries of the town. All the journals of the town gave fuller reports of the proceedings of the Congress than had been previously accorded elsewhere. At this Congress a letter came from Herr Delitzsch; Mr. Wirth wrote from Frankfort; Mr. Axel Krook from Sweden. Dr. Muller, from Norway, who reported that co-operative stores were extending to the villages; and that there is a Norwegian Central Board. Prof. Pfeiffer sent an account of military Co-operation in Germany—a form of Co-operation which it is to be hoped will die out. Denmark, Russia, Italy, and other countries were represented by communications.

The Congress of 1872 was held in Bolton. Bolton-le-moors is not an alluring town to go to, if regard be had alone to its rural scenes or sylvan beauty; but, as respects its inhabitants, its history, its central situation, its growth, its manufacturing and business importance, its capacious co-operative store, and the hospitality of distinguished residents, it is a suitable place to hold a Congress in. The town has none of the grim aspect it wore of old, when it was warlike within, and bleak, barren, and disturbed by enemies without. Flemish clothiers sought out the strange place in the fourteenth century, and possibly it was Flemish genius which gave Arkwright and Crompton to the town. In 1651 one of the Earls of Derby was beheaded there. The latest object of interest in the town is a monument of Crompton, who made the world richer, and died an inventor's death—poor. Bolton, however, did not owe Co-operation to Flemish, but to Birmingham inspiration. Forty-two years before, Mr. Pare delivered the first lecture given in Bolton upon Co-operation, in March, in 1830. He spoke then in the Sessions

Room of that day (which is now an inn), mostly unknown to this generation. I sought in vain for the *Bolton Chronicle* of the year 1830, to copy such notice as appeared of Mr. Pare's meeting. Unluckily, the *Chronicle* office had itself no complete file of its own journal. The public library of the town was not more fortunate. The volumes of the *Chronicle* about the period in question in this library are for 1823, 1825, 1829, and 1835. The 1830 volume was not attainable, so that the seed was not to be traced there which was found upon the waters after so many days.[1]

Many remember it as the Bolton wet Congress. Even Lancashire and Yorkshire delegates were not proof against Bolton rain. The Union Jack persevered in hanging out at the Congress doors, but drooped and draggled mournfully, and presented a limp, desponding appearance. Even the Scotch delegates, who understand a climate where it always rains, except when it snows, came into the hall in Indian file, afraid to walk abreast and confront the morning drizzle, against which no Co-operation could prevail. Some unthinking committee actually invited Mr. Disraeli, then on a visit to Manchester, to attend the Conference. Crowds would be sure to surround the splendid Conservative, and it would be sure to rain all the time of his visit—everybody knew that it would in Manchester—and yet the co-operators invited him and the Countess Beaconsfield to come dripping to Bolton with the 10,000 persons who would have followed. The town would have been impassable. The Co-operative Hall held a fifth part of them; and there would not have been any business whatever transacted while Mr. Disraeli sat in the Congress. It is not more foolish to invite the dead than to invite eminent living persons, unless it is known that they are likely to come, and can be adequately entertained when they do come. To the outside public it is apt to appear like ignorant ostentation. I have known a working-man's society, without means to entertain a commercial traveller pleasantly, invite a cluster of the most eminent and most engaged men in the nation, of such opposite opinions that they never meet each other except

[1] Thomas Thomasson, an illustrious manufacturer of Bolton, may be counted as the originator of Free Trade in England, of whom the reader will see a further notice.

in Parliament, to attend the opening of a small hall in an obscure town, where the visitors pay ninepence each for tea, when a great city would deem it an honour if one of them came as its guest.

This Congress held a public meeting in the same hall where Schofield, the republican, was murdered not long before in the Royalist riots in the town. It was during this Congress that Professor Frederick Denison Maurice died. Knowledge of his influential friendliness to Co-operation caused every delegate to be sorry for his loss. Few co-operators probably among the working class were able to estimate Mr. Maurice's services to society, or measure that range of learning and thought which has given him a high place among thinkers and theologians. A man can be praised by none but his equals, but the tribute of regret all who are grateful can give, in the respects in which they understand their obligations. This co-operators could do, for they were aware he had founded Working Men's Colleges in London to place the highest education within the reach of the humble children of the humblest working man in the nation. Mr. Neale, to whom I suggested the propriety of such a resolution, and to whom it had not occurred, said I had better write it—which I did. It was carried with grateful unanimity.

At this Congress M. Larouche Joubert informed us that the Co-operative Paper Manufactory made £20,000 of profits between June, 1870, and June, 1871—a period so disastrous to France. It used to be the common belief that Co-operation would fall to pieces in trying times, but in Lancashire it stood the test of the great cotton famine, and in France it stood the test of war. Equally during the German war the co-operative credit banks were unshaken. Professor Burns, writing from Italy, told us of the interest taken by Baron Poerio in a Co-operative Society of Naples, which actually existed among a generation reared under a government of suspicion. M. Valleroux reported that not a single productive society gave way in Paris neither under the siege nor the Commune.

Mr. Villard, the secretary of the Social Science Association of America, supplied a survey of co-operation in America, and papers were expected from M. Élisée and his brother M. Élie Reclus, of France, eminent writers on Co-operation. They

would have been present had not the suppressors of the Commune laid their indiscriminating hands on one of them. Too late M. Élisée Reclus was liberated from Satory, where he was confined by misadventure, on account of alleged complicity with the affairs of the Commune, which he opposed and deplored, being himself a friend of pacific, social, and industrial reform. He was (and his brother also) a prominent member of a society for promoting peace and arbitration of the national differences which led to war. Élisée Reclus being an eminent man of science, whose works have been translated into English, great interest in his welfare was felt by men of science in this country. M. Élisée's work upon the "Earth" is held in high repute among geographers. The memorial signed in this country, and presented to M. Thiers on his behalf, bore many eminent signatures, and was happily successful, as M. Reclus's life was in danger from privation and severity of treatment.

The Congress of 1873 was held in the Mechanics' Institution of Newcastle-on-Tyne, Mr. Joseph Cowen, jun., being president. His was the first extemporaneous address delivered to us, and its animation, its freshness of statement, and business force made a great impression. It was the speech of one looking at the movement from without, perfectly understanding its drift, and under no illusions either as to its leaders or its capacity as an industrial policy.

At this Congress was recorded the death of Mr. Pare. It was he who first introduced the American term Congress into this country, and applied it to our meetings. For more than forty years he was the tireless expositor of social principles.

Newcastle is an old fighting border town; there is belligerent blood in the people. If they like a thing, they will put it forward and keep it forward; and if they do not like it, they will put it down with foresight and a strong hand. There is the burr of the forest in their speech, but the meaning in it is as full as a filbert, when you get through the shell. Several passages in the speeches of the President of the Congress give the reader historic and other knowledge of a town, distinguished for repelling foes in warlike times, and for heartiness in welcoming friends in industrial days. The delegates were handsomely taken down the Tyne by

Mr. Cowen in the *Harry Clasper* steamboat; there was a Central Board meeting going on in the cabin, and a public meeting on the deck. If co-operators held a Congress in Paradise they would take no time to look at the fittings, but move somebody into the chair within ten minutes after their arrival. On leaving the *Harry Clasper* a salute of forty-two guns was fired in honour of the forty-two elected members of the Central Board, a tribute no other body of visitors had received in Newcastle, and no Central Board anywhere else since. The delegates were welcomed to the Tyneside with a greater hospitality even than that of the table—namely, that of the Press. The *Newcastle Daily Chronicle* accorded to the Congress an unexampled publicity. It printed full reports of the entire proceedings, the papers read, the debates, and the speeches at every meeting. When the British Association for the Advancement of Science, and the kindred Society for the Promotion of Social Knowledge, visited Newcastle-on-Tyne, the *Daily Chronicle* reported their proceedings in a way never done in any other town of Great Britain or Ireland, and the Co-operative Congress received the same attention. Double numbers were issued each day the Congress sat, and on the following Saturday a supplement of fifty-six columns was given with the *Weekly Chronicle*, containing the complete report of all the co-operative deliberations. Thanks were given to Mr. Richard Bagnall Reed, the manager of the *Newcastle Chronicle*, for that tireless prevision which this extended publication involved. Of the *Chronicle*, containing the first day's proceedings of the Congress, 100,000 copies were published, and 90,000 sold by mid-afternoon. The same paper contained a report of a great meeting on the Moor, of political pitmen, which led to the large sale; but the cause of Co-operation had the advantage of that immense publicity. The Newcastle Moor of 1,200 acres was occupied on the first day of the Congress by a "Demonstration" of nearly 100,000 pitmen, and as many more spectators, on behalf of the equalisation of the franchise between town and county. The richly-bannered procession marched with the order of an army, and was the most perfect example of working-class organisation which had been witnessed in England.

Mr. Cowen, the president of the Congress, was chairman of this great meeting on the Moor. The Ouseburn Co-operative Engineers carried two flags, which they had asked me to lend them, which had seen stormier service. One was the salt-washed flag of the *Washington*, which bore Garibaldi's famous "Thousand" to Marsala, and the other a flag of Mazzini's, the founder of Italian Co-operative Associations, which had been borne in conflicts with the enemies of Italian unity. The best proof of the numbers present is a publication made by the North Eastern Railway Company of their receipts, which that week exceeded by £20,224 the returns of the corresponding week for 1872, which represented the third-class fares of pitmen, travelling from the collieries of Durham and Northumberland to the Newcastle Moor. The Congress also made acquaintance with the oarsmen of the Tyne. A race over four miles of water between Robert Bagnall and John Bright was postponed until the Wednesday, as Mr. Cowen thought it might entertain us to see it, and it was worth seeing, for a pluckier pull never took place on the old Norse war-path of the turbulent Tyne.

It was this year that Mr. Walter Morrison, M.P., presented the Congress with eight handsomely-mounted minute glasses, which, out of compliment it would appear to the Ouseburn Engineers, were described as Speech-Condensing Engines. Four of the glasses ran out in five minutes and four in ten minutes. The object of the gift was to promote brevity and pertinence of speech. There has been engraved upon each glass a couplet suggesting to wandering orators to moderate alike their digressions and warmth ; to come to the point and keep to the point—having, of course, previously made up their minds what their point was. The couplets are these—

Often have you heard it told,
Speech is silver, silence gold.

Wise men often speech withhold,
Fools repeat the trite and old.

Shallow wits are feebly bold,
Pondered words take deeper hold.

Time is fleeting, time is gold,
When our work is manifold.

If terseness be the soul of wit,
Say your say and be done with it.

Fluent speech, wise men have said,
Oft betrays an empty head.

Conscious strength is calm in speech,
Weaker natures scold and screech.

Patience, temper, hopefulness,
Lead you onward to success.

In Athens, an accused person, when defending himself before the dikastery, was confronted by a klepsydra, or water glass. The number of amphoræ of water allowed to each speaker depended upon the importance of the case. At Rome, the prosecutor was allowed only two-thirds of the water allowed to the accused. At the Congress, the five-minute glass was generally in use, the ten-minute one when justice to a subject or a speaker required the longer time.

The Congress of 1874 was held in Halifax, when Mr. Thomas Brassey, M.P., was president, who gave us information as to the conditions of co-operative manufacturing. The authority of his name and his great business experience rendered his address of importance and value to us. The store at Halifax had come by this time to command attention, and the co-operative and social features introduced into the manufactories of the Crossleys and the Ackroyds rendered the meeting in that town interesting.

Professor Thorold Rogers, of Oxford, presided at the London Congress of 1875. He stated to us the relations of political economy to Co-operation, sometimes dissenting from the views of co-operative leaders, but always adding to our information. It is the merit of co-operators that they look to their presidents not for coincidence of opinion but for instruction. Not less distinguished as a politician than as a political economist, the presence of Professor Rogers in the chair was a public advantage to the cause.

Mr. Wendell Phillips, of America, was invited by the Congress to be its guest. The great advocate of the industrial classes, irrespective of their colour, would have received distinguished welcome from co-operators who regard the slaves as their fellow working men, and honour all who endow them with the freedom which renders self-help possible to them. Mr. Phillips was unable to leave America, but a letter was read to the Congress from him.

At this Congress in a paper contributed, N. Zurzoff explained the introduction and progress of Schulze-Delitzsch's banking system in Russia. It was met by a very unfavourable feeling on the part of the Russian Government and the people. They did not understand it and did not want it. It took Prince Bassilbehikoff no little trouble to make it intelligible in

St. Petersburg. In 1870 thirteen banks were got into operation; in 1874 more than two hundred. At the same Congress Mr. Walter Morrison read a paper giving an English account of the history, nature, and operation of the Schulze-Delitzsch German Credit Banks, the fullest and most explicit.

A proposal was made at this Congress to promote a co-operative trading company between England and the Mississippi Valley, and a deputation the following year went out to ascertain the feasibility of the project. Friendly relations have been established between the better class of Grangers. It is necessary to say better class, because some of them were concerned in obtaining a reduction of the railway tariff for the conveyance of their produce, by means which appeared in England to be of a nature wholly indefensible. But with those of them who sought to promote commercial economy by equitable co-operative arrangements, they were anxious to be associated. The plan devised by Mr. Neale, who was the most eminent member of the deputation, would promote both international Co-operation and free trade; objects which some of the co-operative societies made large votes of money to assist.[1]

At the Glasgow Congress of 1876, Professor Hodgson, of Edinburgh, was our president. In movements having industrial and economical sense, Professor Hodgson's name was oft mentioned as that of a great advocate of social justice whose pen and tongue could always be counted upon. The working-class Congress at Glasgow had ample proof of this. Political economy has no great reputation for liveliness of doctrine or exposition; but in Professor Hodgson's hands its exposition was full of vivacity, and the illustrations of its principle were made luminous with wit and humour.

At this Congress, Mr. J. W. A. Wright was present as a delegate from the Grangers of America, who had passed resolutions in their own Conferences to promote "Co-operation on the Rochdale plan." Mr. Neale and Mr. Joseph Smith promoted an Anglo-American co-operative trading company.

The Museum Hall, Leicester, was the place in which the Congress of 1877 was held. The Hon. Auberon Herbert was

[1] Mr. Neale was one of the deputation to New Orleans. At one point at which the vessel stopped, he accidentally fell into the sea, but maintained himself a quarter of an hour in the water until he was rescued.

president this year, and counselled us with impassioned frankness against the dangers of centralisation and described merits unseen by us in the adjusting principle of competition. He owned we might regard him as a devil's advocate, to which I answered that if he were so, we all agreed the devil had shown his excellent taste in sending us so earnest and engaging a representative. For the first time a sermon was preached before the delegates by Canon Vaughan, whose discourse was singularly direct. It dealt with the subject knowingly, and with that only ; and the subject was not made—as preachers of the commoner sort have often made it—a medium of saying something else. It dealt with Co-operation mathematically. Euclid could not go from one point to another in a shorter way. No delegate at the Congress could understand Co-operation better than the Canon ; he made a splendid plea for what is regarded as an essential principle of Co-operation—the recognition of labour in productive industry—the partnership of the worker with capital. The church was very crowded, and there was a large attendance of delegates.

The Tenth Congress, that of 1878, was held in Manchester, where great changes had occurred since the Congress of 1870. Balloon Street had come to represent a great European buying agency ; the Downing Street store had acquired some twelve branches, and the Congress of 1878 was more numerous and animated in proportion. On the Sunday before it opened, the Rev. W. N. Molesworth, of Rochdale, preached before the delegates at the Cathedral, augmenting the wise suggestions and friendly counsel by which co-operators had profited in their earlier career. The Rev. Mr. Steinthal also preached a sermon to us the same day. The Marquis of Ripon presided at the Congress, recalling the delegates to the duty of advancing the neglected department of production. We criticised with approval the Marquis's address. My defence was that it was our custom, as we regarded the Presidential address as Parliament does a royal speech, concerning which Canning said Parliament receives no communication which it does not echo, and it echoes nothing which it does not discuss. On the second day the Lord Bishop of Manchester presided, making one of those bright cheery addresses for which he was distinguished : showing real secular interest in co-operative things.

His religion, as is the characteristic of the religion of the gentleman, was never obtruded and never absent, being felt in every sentence, in the justice, candour, and sympathy shown towards those whose aims he discerned to be well intended, though they may have less knowledge, or other light than his, to guide them on their path. The Rev. Mr. Molesworth presided on one day as he had done at the Congress of 1870. Dr. John Watts was president on the last day, delivering an address marked by his unrivalled knowledge of co-operative business and policy, and that felicity of illustration whose light is drawn from the subject it illumines.

There was one who died during this Congress time, once a familiar name—Mr. George Alexander Fleming. Between 1835 and 1846 there was no Congress held at which he was not a principal figure. He was editor nearly all the time (thirteen years) of the *New Moral World*, a well-known predecessor of the *Co-operative News*. We used to make merry with his initials, "G. A. F.," but he was himself a practical, active agitator in the social cause. A border Scot by birth (being born at Berwick, Northumberland), he had the caution of his countrymen north of the Tweed; and though he showed zeal for social ideas, he had no adventurous sympathy with the outside life of the world; and Socialism had an aspect of sectarianism in his hands. He was an animated, vigorous speaker, and there was a business quality in his writings which did good service in his day. After he left the movement he soon made a place for himself in the world. Like many other able co-operators, he was not afraid of competition, and could hold his own amid the cunningest operators in that field. He took an engagement on the *Morning Advertiser*, and represented that paper in the gallery of the House of Commons until his death. He founded, or was chief promoter and conductor of, the *South London Press*. He first became known to the public as an eloquent speaker in the "Ten Hours' Bill" movement. All his life, to its close, he was a constant writer. Of late years he was well known to visitors at the Discussion Hall, in Shoe Lane, and the "Forum," in Fleet Street. He had reached seventy years of age, at which a man is called elderly. About a year before, he married a second time. He was buried at Nunhead.

Many years ago, at a dinner given at the Whittington Club to the chief Socialist advocates, he boasted, somewhat reproachfully, that he then obtained twice as much income for half the work he performed when connected with the social movement. But that was irrelevant, for the best advocates in that movement did not expect to serve themselves so much as to serve others. I have seen men die poor, and yet glad that they had been able to be of use to those who never even thought of requiting them. The consciousness of the good they had done in that way was the reward they most cared for. Mr. Fleming's merit was, that in the stormy and fighting days of the movement, he was one of the foremost men in the perilous fray, and therefore his name ought to be mentioned with regard in these pages. Like all public men who once belonged to the social movement, he was constantly found advocating and supporting, by wider knowledge than his mere political contemporaries possessed, liberty both of social life and social thought. I have often come upon unexpected instances in which he was true to old principles, and gave influence and argument to them, though quite out of sight of his old colleagues.

The hospitality to delegates commenced at Newcastle-on-Tyne has been a feature with variations at most subsequent Congresses, the chief stores being mainly the hosts of the delegates. In Bolton and in Leicester, as on the Tyneside and London, eminent friends of social effort among the people entertained many visitors.

The Central Board have published a considerable series of tracts, handbooks, special pamphlets, and lectures by co-operative writers, and sums of money every year are devoted to their gratuitous circulation. Any person wishing information upon the subject of Co-operation, or the formation of stores, or models of rules for the constitution of societies, can obtain them by applying to the Secretary of the Co-operative Union, Long Millgate, Manchester.

The sons of industry owe respect to the co-operators who preceded them. They furnished the knowledge by which we have profited. They had more than hope where others had despair. They saw progress where others saw nothing, and pointed to a path which industry had never

before trodden. The pioneers who have gone before have, like Marco Polo, or Columbus, or Sir Walter Raleigh, explored, so to speak, unknown seas of industry, have made maps of their course and records of their soundings. We know where the hidden rocks of enterprise lie, and the shoals and whirlpools of discord and disunity. We know what vortexes to avoid. The earlier and later movement has been one army though it carried no hostile flags. Its advocates were all members of one parliament, which, though several times prorogued, was never dissolved.

A movement is like a river. It percolates from an obscure source. It runs at best but deviously. It meets with an immovable obstacle and has to run round it. It makes its way where the soil is most pervious to water, and when it has travelled through a great extent of country, its windings sometimes bring it back to a spot which is not far in advance of its source. Eventually it trickles into unknown apertures which its own impetus and growing volume convert into a track. Though making countless circuits, it ever advances to the sea; though it appears to wander aimlessly through the earth, it is always proceeding; and its very length of way implies more distributed fertilisation on its course. So it is with human movements. A great principle has often a very humble source. It trickles at first slowly, uncertainly, and blindly. It moves through society as the river does through the land. It encounters understandings as impenetrable as granite, and has to find a passage through more impressionable minds; it digresses but never recedes. Like the currents which aid the river, principle has pioneers who make a way for it, who, if they cannot blast the rocks of stupidity, excavate the more intelligent strata of society. Though the way is long and lies through many a channel and maze, and though the new stream of thought seems to lose itself, the great current gathers unconscious force, new outlets seem to open of themselves, and in an unexpected hour the accumulated torrent of ideas bursts open a final passage to the great sea of truth.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

THE FUTURE OF CO-OPERATION

"So with this earthly Paradise it is,
If ye will read aright, and pardon me,
Who strive to build a shadowy isle of bliss
Midmost the beating of the steely sea,
Where tossed about all hearts of men must be;
Whose ravening monsters mighty men shall slay,
Not the poor singer of an empty day."

WILLIAM MORRIS, *The Earthly Paradise.*

To the reader I owe an apology for having detained him so long over a story upon which I have lingered myself several years. Imperious delays have beset me, until I have been like one driving a flock to market, who, having abandoned them for a time, has found difficulty in re-collecting them. No doubt I have lost some, and have probably driven up some belonging to other persons, without being aware of the illicit admixture.

Mr. Morris's lines, prefixed to this chapter, are not inapplicable to the story of labour seeking rights. For myself I am no "singer," nor do I believe in the "empty day" which the poet modestly suggests. No day is "empty" which contains a poet. Nevertheless, I am persuaded that "the isle of bliss" will yet arise "midmost the beatings of the steely sea," and that the "ravening monsters," industrial and otherwise, which now intimidate society, "mighty men" will one day "slay."

Society is improved by a thousand agencies. I only contend that Co-operation is one. Co-operation, I repeat, is the new force of industry which attains competency without mendicancy, and effaces inequality by equalising fortunes. The equality contemplated is not that of men who aim to be

equal to their superiors and superior to their equals. The simple equality it seeks consists in the diffusion of the means of general competence, until every family is insured against dependence or want, and no man in old age, however unfortunate or unthrifty he may have been, shall stumble into pauperism. His want of sense, or want of thrift, may rob him of repute or power, but shall never sink him so low that crime shall be justifiable, or his fate a scandal to any one save himself. The road to this state of things is long, but at the end lies the pleasant Valley of Competence.

There is no equality in nature, of strength or stature, of taste or knowledge, or force or faculty. Many may row in the same boat, but, as Jerrold said, not with the same oars. But there may be equivalence, though not equality in power: the sum of one man's powers may be equal to another's if we knew how to measure the degrees of their diversity. It is in equality of opportunity of developing the qualities for good each man is endowed with, that is the immediate need of mankind.

Machinery has become a power as great as though 100 millions of giants had entered Great Britain to work for its people. And these giants never feel hunger, or passion, or weariness, and their power is immeasurable. Yet the lot of the poor is precarious, and the very poor amount to millions. Yet somehow the giants have not worked adequately for the many as yet. It is true that a higher scale of life is reached by the poorer sort than of old; still they are but the servants of capital, and are hired. Co-operation opens the door to partnership.

When "Distribution shall undo excess and each man has enough" for secure existence, the baser incentives to greed, fraud, and violence will cease. The social outrages, the coarseness of life, at which we are shocked, were once thought to be inevitable. Our being shocked at them now is a sign of progress. The steps of society are—(1) Savageness; (2) The mastership by chiefs of the ferocious; (3) The government of ferocity tempered by rude lawfulness; (4) Rude lawfulness matured into a general right of protection; (5) Protection insured by political representation; (6) Ascendancy of the people diminishing the arrogance and espionage of

government; (7) Self-control matured into self-support; when the philanthropist becomes merely ornamental and charity and disease unnecessary evils. We are far from that state yet; but Co-operation is the most likely thing apparent to accelerate the march to it.

Sir Arthur Helps has told the public that "what Socialists are always aiming at is paternal government, under which they are to be spoilt children." Sir Arthur must have in his mind State Socialists—very different persons from co-operators, who are Next Step takers.

The co-operative form of progress is the organisation of self-help, in which the industrious do everything, and devise that order of things in which it shall be impossible for honest men to be idle or ignorant, depraved or poor: in which self-help supersedes patronage and paternalism.

Co-operation has been retarded by a spurious order of "practical" men. These kind of people would have stopped the creation of the world on the second day on the ground that it was no use going on. Had the law of gravitation been explained to them, they would have passed an unanimous resolution to the effect that it was "impracticable." Had the solar system been floated by a company they would not have taken a share in it, being perfectly sure it could never be made to work; or if it were started they would have assured us the planets would never keep time. Were the sun to be discovered for the first time to-day they would not look at it, but declare it could never be turned to any useful account, and discourage investments in it, lest it should divert capital from the more important and more practical candle movement. Had these people been told before they were born that they would be "fearfully and wonderfully made"—that the human frame would be very complicated—they would have been afraid to exist. They would have looked at the nice adjustment of a thousand parts necessary to life, and they would have declared it impossible to live.

The hopeless tone of many of the working class has been changed by Co-operation. An artisan begins to see that he is a member of the Order of Industry, which ought to be the frankest, boldest, most self-reliant of all "Orders." The Order of Thinkers are pioneers—the Order of Workmen

are conquerors. They subjugate Nature and turn the dreams of thought into realities of life. Why, then, should not a workman always think and speak with evident consciousness of the dignity of his own order, and as one careful for its reputation? It is absurd to see the sovereign people with a perpetual handkerchief at its eyes, and a constant hat in its hands. The sovereign people should neither whine nor beg. A workman having English blood in his veins should have some dignity in his manner. More is expected from him than from the manacled negro, who could only put up his hands and cry, "Am I not a man and a brother?" The English artisan ought to be a man whether a "brother or not." I hate the people who wail. Either their lot is not improvable, or it is. If it be not improvable, wailing is weakness: if it be improvable, wailing is cowardice.

When I first entered the social agitation long years ago, competition was a chopping-machine and the poor were always under the knife. If an employer had a reasonable regard for the welfare of the operatives engaged by him, his manner was hard (as still is the manner of many), and never indicated good feeling. He lacked that sympathy the want of which the late Justice Talfourd said, was the great defect of the master class in England. The master at best seemed to regard his men as a flock of wayward sheep, and himself as a sheep-dog. He indeed kept the wolf from their door, but they were not sensible of the service, because he bit them when they turned aside. Owing to this cause creditable kindness when displayed was not discerned. At no time in my youth do I remember to have heard any expression which indicated esteem on the part of the employed towards their employers; and when I listened to the conversation of workmen in foundries and factories in the same town, or to that of workmen who came from distant places, it appeared that this state of feeling was general. The men regarded their masters as commercial weasels who slept with one eye open, in order to see whether they neglected their work. Employers looked upon their men as clocks which would not go, or which if they did were right only once in twenty-four hours; and that not through any virtue of their own, but because the right time came round to them.

Employers now, as a rule, have more friendliness of manner. Factory legislation has done much to improve the comfort of workshops and limit the labour of children and women. Farm legislation will come, and do something to the same effect for agricultural working people. Besides these, consideration, taste, and pride in employers have done more. The warehouses of great towns are less hideous to look upon by the townspeople and less dreary to work in. Workshops are in many places opulent and lofty, and are palaces of labour compared with the penitentiary structures which deformed the streets and high-roads generations ago. The old charnel-houses of industry are being everywhere superseded. Light, air, some grim kind of grace, make the workman's days healthier and pleasanter; and conveniences for his comfort and even education, never thought of formerly, are often supplied now. The stores and mills erected by co-operators show that they have set their faces against the architects or ugliness, and the new standard can never go back among employers of greater pretensions.

Under the self-supporting example of the common people the better classes may be expected to improve. The working class will be no more told to look to frugality alone as their means of competence. "Frugality" is oft the fair-sounding term in which the counsel of privation is disguised to the poor. We shall see the opulent advised to practise the wholesome virtue of frugality (good for all conditions). They might then live on much less than they now expend. There then would remain an immense surplus, available for the public service, since the provident wealthy would not want it. Advice cannot much longer be given to the people which is never taken by those who offer it, and which is intended to reconcile the many to an indefensible and unnecessary inequality.

The unrest of competition produces disastrous consequences in diseases which strike down the most energetic men by day and night, without warning. Some quieter method of progress will be wished for and be welcomed. In the old times when none could read, save the priest and a few peers, learning was a passion, and the thoughtful monk, who had no worldly care or want, toiled in his cell from the pure love of study, and

carried on the thought of the world as Bruno did, with no spur, save that supplied by genius and the love of truth. Now the printing-press has called into activity the intellect of mankind—ambition and emulation, industry and discovery, invention and art, will proceed by the natural force of thought, however Co-operation may prevail. Indeed, Co-operation may facilitate them. If Peace hath her victories as well as War—which a poet was first to see—concert in life has its million devices, activities, and inspirations. The world will not be mute, nor men idle, because the brutal goad of competition no longer pricks them on to activity. The future will not be less brilliant than the past, because its background is contentment instead of misery.

People who say that the world would come to a standstill were it not for the pressure of hunger and poverty, and that we should all be idle were we not judiciously starved, should spend five minutes in the study of the ceaseless, joyous, and gratuitous activity of the first Lord Lytton. Of high lineage, of good fortune, of capacity which understood life without effort, occupying a position which commanded deference, and of personal qualities which secured him friends, he had only to live to be distinguished, yet this man, as baronet and peer, worked as many hours of his own will as any mechanic in the land, and of his own natural love of activity created for the world more pleasant reading than all the House of Lords put together, save Macaulay.

The present casts its light of change some distance before, and the near future can be discerned—Co-operation bids fair to clear the sight of the industrial class as to what they can do for themselves.

Men as a rule have not half the brains of bees. Bees respect only those who contribute to the common store, they keep no terms with drones, but drag them out and make short work with them. Men suffer the drones to become kings of the hive, and pay them homage. Co-operators of the earliest type set their faces against uselessness. With all their sentimentality they kept no place for drones. They did not mean to be mendicants themselves nor to have mendicants in their ranks. They had no plan either of indoor or outdoor relief for them. The first number of the *Co-operative Magazine* for 1826 made

its first condition of happiness to consist in "occupation." Avoidable dependence will come to be deemed ignominious. As wild beasts retreat before the march of civilisation, so pauperism will retreat before the march of co-operative industry. Pauperism will be put down as the infamy of industry. A million paupers—a vast standing army of mendicants—in the midst of the working class—is a reproach to every workman now. Workmen will learn to clear their way, and pay their way, as the middle-class have learned to do. Every law which deprives industry of a fair chance, or facilitates the accumulation of immense fortunes, and checks the equitable distribution of property, will be stopped, as far as legitimate legislation can stop it. Not long since a politician so experienced as Louis Blanc made a great speech in Paris, in which he said, "Most frankly he admitted that the problem of the extinction of pauperism, which he believed possible, was too vast and complicated to be treated without modesty and prudence, and he would even add, doubt." In our English Parliament I have heard ministers use similar language, without seeming aware that no legislature would extinguish pauperism if it could. If the proposal was seriously made, on every bench in the House of Commons, peer and squire and manufacturer would jump up in dismay and apprehension. The sudden "extinction of pauperism" would produce consternation in town and county throughout the land. Were there no paupers there would be no poor. Nobody would be dependent, service of the humble kind that now ministers to ostentatious opulence would cease. The pride, power, and influence that comes from almsgiving would end. In England, as in America, the "servant" would disappear and in his place would arise a new class, limited and costly, who would only engage themselves as "helpers" and equals. Besides, there would be in Great Britain opposition among the paupers themselves. The majority of them do not want to be abolished. They have been reared under the impression that they have a vested interest in charity—humiliation sits easy upon them. It is not Acts of Parliament that can do much to alter this, it is the means of self-help which alone can bring it to pass.

At a public meeting in the metropolis, some years ago,

Prince Albert was one of the speakers, and he was on the occasion surrounded by many noblemen. The subject of his speech was improvement in the condition of the indigent. The Prince, looking around him at the wealthy lords on the platform, and to some poor men in the meeting, said, very gracefully, "We," looking again at a duke near him, "to whom Providence has given rank, wealth, and education, ought to do what lies in our power for the less fortunate." This was very generous of the Prince, but men look now for a surer deliverance. Providence was not the benefactor of princes and dukes. He gave them no possessions. They got them in a very different way. The wealth of nature is given to all, not to the few, and Co-operation furnishes means of attaining it to all who have honesty, sense, and unity.

Nothing is more astounding to students of industrial progress than to observe among commercial men and politicians the utter absence of any idea of distribution of gains among the people. The only concern is that the capitalist or the individual dealer shall profit. It is nobody's concern that the community should profit. It is nobody's idea that everybody should profit by what man's genius creates. It does not enter into any mind that disproportionate wealth is an aggressive accumulation of means in the hands of a few which ought to be, as far as possible, diffusible in equity among all for mutual protection. The feudalism of capital is as dangerous as that of arms.

It was stated by the editor of the *Co-operative Magazine* in 1826, in very explicit terms, that "Mr. Owen does not propose that the rich should give up their property to the poor; but that the poor should be placed in such a situation as would enable them to create *new wealth* for themselves."[1] This is what Co-operation is intended to do, and this, let us hope, it will do.

The instinct of Co-operation is self-help. Only men of independent spirit are attracted by it. The intention of the co-operator has been never to depend upon parliamentary consideration for help, nor upon the sympathy of the rich for charity, nor upon pity nor the prayer of the priest. The co-operator may be a believer, and generally is, but he is self-reliant in the first place, and a believer in the second. Pity is

[1] *Co-operative Magazine*, No. 1, January, 1826, p. 31.

out of his way, because he does not like to distress people to give it. Help by prayer is the most compendious and easy way of getting it, but the co-operator, who is generally a modest man, does not like to give the priest the trouble of procuring it, whose machinery seems never in order when it is most wanted to work. When the working class have learnt the lesson of self-support and self-protection there may be piety and devotion and the love of God among them, but they will owe their fortunes to themselves. Co-operators know, however excellent faith may be, it is not business. No trades union can obtain an increase of wages by faith. No employer will give a man a good engagement in consideration of what he believes. His chances entirely depend on what he can do. The most celebrated manufacturing firm would be ruined in repute if the twelve apostles worked for it, unless they knew their business. Piety, ever so conspicuous, fetches no price in the labour market. There is no creed the profession of which will induce a Chancellor of the Exchequer to remit the assessed taxes, or a magistrate to excuse the non-payment of local rates. People have been misled by the well-intentioned but mischievous lesson which has taught them to employ mendicant supplication to Heaven. When the evil day comes—when the parent has no means of supporting his family or discharging his duty as a citizen—the Churches render no help, the State admits of no excuse : it accords nothing but the contemptuous charity of the poor law. The day of self-help has come, and this will be the complexion of the future.

Co-operation, in imparting the power of self-help, abates that distrust which has kept the people down. Above all projects of our day co-operative industry has mitigated the wholesale suspicion of riches and capitalists. This means good understanding in the future between those who have saved money, and the many who need to save it, and mean to save it. The old imbecility of poverty is disappearing. The incapacitating objection to paying interest for money is scarcely visible anywhere. What does it matter how rich another grows, whether he be capitalist or employer, whether he be called master or millionaire, providing he who is poor can contrive to attain competence by his own aid ? Jealousy or distrust of another's success is only justifiable when he bars the

way to those below him, equally entitled to a reasonable chance of rising. War upon the rich is only lawful when, not content with their own good fortune, they close every door upon the poor, give no heed to their just claims, deny them, whether by law or combination, fair means of self-help, discouraging the honest, the industrious, and the thrifty from ascending the ladder of prosperity on which they have mounted. Property has no rights in equity when it owns no obligation of justice, and ceases to be considerate to others. If the wealthy proposed to kill the indigent, they would provoke a war in which the slain would not be all on one side ; and since the powerful must consent to the weak existing, that consent implies the right of the weak to live, and the right to live includes the right to a certain share of the wealth of the community, proportionate to the labour and skill they contribute in creating it. Property has to provide for this or must permit it to be provided by others, or it will be itself in jeopardy. The power of creating a pacifying distribution of means is afforded by practical Co-operation. As I have said, it asks no aid from the State ; it petitions for no gift, disturbs no interests, attacks nobody's fortune, attempts no confiscation of existing gains, but clears its own ground, gathers in its own harvest, distributes the golden grain equitably among all the husbandmen. Without needing favours or incurring obligations, it establishes the industrious classes among the possessors of the fruits of the earth. As the power of self-existence in nature includes all other attributes, so self-help in the people includes all the conditions of progress. Co-operation is organised self-help—that is what the complexion of the future will be.

CHAPTER XXXIX

AN OUTSIDE CHAPTER

Reply to "Fraser's Magazine."—The only notice of my first volume to which I desire to reply is one which Professor Newman did me the honour to make in *Fraser*.[1] Mr. Newman was alike incapable of being unfair or unjust, and to me he had been neither, but he had misconceived what I had said about State Socialism and capitalists. I blame no one who misconceives my word—I blame myself. It is the duty of a writer to be so clear that obtuseness cannot misapprehend him nor malice pervert what he says. Mr. Newman was neither obtuse nor malicious. Few men saw so clearly as he into social questions, or were so considerate as he in his objections. He scrupulously said I had, "unawares" and "inconsistently" with my known views, fallen into errors. Mr. Newman did me the honour to remember that I try with what capacity I have not to be foolish, and that I regard unfairness and even inaccuracy of statement as of the nature of a crime against truth.

I quoted the edict of Babeuf (p. 25, vol. i.), "That they do nothing for the country who do not serve it by some useful occupation," to show that the most extreme communists kept no terms either with "laziness or plunder"—the two sins usually charged against these theorists. From this Mr. Newman concluded that I would deny persons the right to enjoy inherited property. Writers on property are accustomed to enumerate but three ways of acquiring it—namely, to earn it, to beg it, or to steal it. Mr. Newman's sagacity enabled him to

[1] *Fraser's Magazine*, December, 1875.

point out a fourth way—persons may inherit it. I confess this did not occur to me, nor did I ask myself whether Babeuf thought of it. I took his edict to apply only to persons for whose welfare the State made itself responsible. It was in this sense only that I thought it right that all should be "usefully occupied."

Mr. Newman said, "I would fain pass off" Mr. Owen's administration of the New Lanark Mills "as Co-operation." Surely I would not. Mr. Newman said, "Mr. Owen patronised the workman." Certainly—that is exactly what he did, and this is what I do not like. It was at best but a good sort of despotism, and had the merit of being better than the bad sort. He proved that equity, though paternally conceded, *paid*, which no manufacturer had made publicly clear before.

One who has not written on this subject, Mr. John Bright, but who is as famous for his familiarity with it, as for his readiness in repartee, said to me, "There is one thing in your book to which I object—you speak of the tyranny of capital." "But it was not in my mind," I rejoined. "But it is in your book," was the answer. No reply could be more conclusive. Capital may be put to tyrannical uses; but capital itself is the independent, passionless means of all material progress. It is only its misuse against which we have to provide, and I ought to have been careful to have said so.

For State Socialism I have less than sympathy, I have dislike. Lassalle and Marx, of the same race, Comte and Napoleon III. are all identifiable by one sign—they ridicule the dwarfish efforts of the slaves of wages to transform capitalistic society. Like the Emperor of the French, they overflow with what seems eloquent sympathy for helpless workmen ground to powder in the mill of capital. They all mean that the State will grind them in a more benevolent way of its own, if working men will abjure politics, and submit themselves to the paternal operators who alone know what is best for them.

There was a German Disraeli—namely, Prince Bismarck—who befriended the German Jew as Lord Derby did the English one. It was Ferdinand Lassalle, handsome, unscrupulous, a dandy with boundless bounce; a Sybarite in his life, beaming in velvet, jewellery, and curly hair, who affected to be the friend of the working class. Deserting the party to

which he belonged for not appreciating him, he turned against it, and conceived the idea of organising German workmen as a political force to oppose the middle class, exactly as the Chartists were used in England. Lassalle's language to the working men was that "they could not benefit themselves by frugality or saving—the cruel, brazen law of wages made individual exertion unavailing—their only trust was in State help." With all who disliked exertion Lassalle was popular; for there were German Jingoes in his day. By dress and parade he kept himself distinguished, and also obtained an annuity from a Countess who much exceeded his age. The author of "Vivian Grey" was distanced by Lassalle, who told the world that "he wrote his pamphlets armed with all the culture of his century." In other respects he showed less skill than his English rival. Mr. Disraeli insulted O'Connell whom it was known would not fight a duel, and then challenged his son Morgan, whom he had not insulted, and who declined to fight until he was. Disraeli prudently did not qualify him. Lassalle, less weary, discerned no discretionary course, and Count Rackonitz shot him, otherwise Bismarck would have been superseded at the Berlin Congress, and a German Beaconsfield had been President. In blood, religion, and policy, in manners and ambition, and in success (save in duelling) both men were the same. Our Conservative Lassalle had an incubator of State Socialism for this country and the Young England party came out of it.

Co-operative Methods in 1828.—In 1828, when Lord John Russell was laying the foundation-stone of the British Schools in Brighton, Dr. King was writing to Lord Brougham, then Henry Brougham, M.P., an account of the then new scheme of Co-operative Stores. It is a practical, well-written appeal to a statesman, and enables us to see what Brougham had the means of knowing at that early period of the nature of Co-operation as a new social force. The following is Dr. King's statement:—

"A number of persons in Brighton, chiefly of the working class, having read works on the subject of Co-operation, conceived the possibility of reducing it to practice in some shape or other. They accordingly formed themselves into a society,

and met once a week for reading and conversation on the subject; they also began a weekly subscription of 1d. The numbers who joined were considerable—at one time upwards of 170; but, as happens in such cases, many were lukewarm and indifferent, and the numbers fluctuated. Those who remained showed at once an evident improvement of their minds. When the subscriptions amounted to £5 the sum was invested in groceries, which were retailed to the members. Business kept increasing, the first week the amount sold was half-a-crown; it is now about £38. The profit is about 10 per cent.; so that a return of £20 a week pays all expenses, besides which the members have a large room to meet in and work in. About six months ago the society took a lease of twenty-eight acres of land, about nine miles from Brighton, which they cultivate as a garden and nursery out of their surplus capital. They employ on the garden, out of seventy-five members, four, and sometimes five men, with their own capital. They pay the men at the garden 14s. a week, the ordinary rate of wages in the country being 10s., and of parish labourers 6s. The men are also allowed rent and vegetables. They take their meals together. One man is married and his wife is housekeeper.

"The principle of the society is—the value of labour. The operation is by means of a common capital. An individual capital is an impossibility to the workman, but a common capital not. The advantage of the plan is that of mutual iusurance; but there is an advantage beyond, viz., that the workman will thus get the whole produce of his labour to himself; and if he chooses to work harder or longer, he will benefit in proportion. If it is possible for men to work for themselves, many advantages will arise. The other day they wanted a certain quantity of land planted before the winter. Thirteen members went from Brighton early in the morning, gave a day's work, performed the task, and returned home at night. The man who formerly had the land, when he came to market, allowed himself 10s. to spend. The man who now comes to market for the society is contented with 1s. extra wages. Thus these men are in a fair way to accumulate capital enough to find all the members with constant employment; and of course the capital will not stop there. Other

societies are springing up. Those at Worthing and Finden are proceeding as prosperously as ours, only on a smaller scale. If Co-operation be once proved practicable, the working classes will soon see their interest in adopting it. If this goes on, it will draw labour from the market, raise wages, and so operate upon pauperism and crime. All this is pounds, shillings, and pence; but another most important feature remains. The members see immediately the value of knowledge. They employ their leisure time in reading and mutual instruction. They have appointed one of their members librarian and schoolmaster; he teaches every evening. Even their discussions involve both practice and theory, and are of a most improving nature. Their feelings are of an enlarged, liberal, and charitable description. They have no disputes, and feel towards mankind at large as brethren. The *élite* of the society were members of the Mechanics' Institution, and my pupils, and their minds were no doubt prepared there for this society. It is a happy consummation.

"In conclusion, I beg to propose to your great and philanthropic mind the question as to how such societies may be affected by the present state of the law; or how far future laws may be so framed as to operate favourably to them. At the same time, they ask nothing from any one but to be let alone, and nothing from the law but protection. As I have had the opportunity of watching every step of this society, I consider their case proved; but others at a distance will want further experience. If the case is proved, I consider it due to you, sir, as a legislator, philosopher, and the friend of man, to lay it before you. This society will afford you additional motives for completing the Library of Useful Knowledge—the great forerunner of human improvement."

The First Sales of the Rochdale Pioneers.—In 1866, when Mr. Samuel Ashworth left the Rochdale store to manage the Manchester Wholesale Society, a presentation was made to him in the Board Room of the Corn Mill. A correspondent of the *Working Man* sent to me at the time these particulars, not published save in that journal. In the course of the proceedings Mr. William Cooper related how he and Samuel Ashworth were among the first persons who served customers in

the store in Toad Lane, when it was opened in 1844 for sales of articles in the grocery business. "We then," said Mr. Cooper, "sold goods at the store about two nights in the week, opening at about eight o'clock p.m., and closing in two hours after. Mr. Ashworth served in the shop one week, and I the week following. We gave our services for the first three months, except that the committee bought each of us a pair of white sleeves—something like butchers wear on their arms, to make us look tidy and clean, and, if the truth is to be owned, I daresay they were to cover the grease which stuck to and shone upon our jacket sleeves as woollen weavers. At that time every member that worked for the store, whether as secretary, treasurer, purchaser, or auditor, did it for the good of the society, without any reward in wages or salary.

"When Samuel Ashworth joined the society, in 1844, he was only nineteen years of age. He was behind the counter on December 21, 1844, that memorable day when the shutters were first taken down from the shop-front in Toad Lane, and was one of those stared at by every passer-by. The stock with which the co-operators opened the shop was as follows: 1 qr. 22 lb. of butter, 2 qrs. of sugar, 3 sacks of flour at 37s. 6d., and 3 sacks at 36s., 2 dozen of candles, and 1 sack of meal. The total cost of this stock was £16 11s. 11d.; and it appeared they must have had a fortnight's stock of flour, for there was none bought the second week. The second week the stock was slightly decreased, the amount of purchases for the fortnight being £24 14s. 7d."

Those goods Samuel Ashworth and William Cooper had the pleasure of selling as unpaid shopkeepers—"a bad precedent," remarked Mr. Ashworth, in the course of a speech made by him, "because even now some of their members do not like to pay their servants the best of wages." It is instructive to compare the difference between the weekly sale of goods during the first fortnight of the society's existence, and their weekly sales twelve years later:—

	Weekly Sales in 1844.		Weekly Sales in 1856.
Butter	 50 lb.	...	220 firkins, or 15,400 lb.
Sugar	 40 lb.	...	170 cwt., or 19,040 lb.
Flour	 3 sacks	...	468 sacks.
Soap	 56 lb.	...	2 tons 13 cwt., or 5,936 lb.

Subsequently, when the price of sugar was rapidly rising, Mr. Ashworth ordered 50 tons of sugar in three days, and on another occasion he gave an order for 4,000 sacks of flour at once. The weekly receipts during the first fortnight of the society's operations did not average £10, twelve years later, in 1866, the weekly sales were £4,822.

The End of the Orbiston Community.—The most interesting and authentic account of Orbiston, its objects, principles, financial arrangements, and end, is that given in the newspapers of 1829 and 1830. The following appeared under the head of "Law Intelligence—Vice Chancellor's Court"—JONES *v.* MORGAN AND OTHERS—THE SOCIALISTS.—This case came before the court upon the demurrer of a lady, named Rathbone, put in to a Bill filed by several shareholders of the Orbiston Company, on the ground that such shareholders had contributed more than was justly due from them, and to recover the excess. The grounds of the demurrers were want of equity. The case came before the court upon the demurrer of a person named Cooper. The facts appeared to be these: In the year 1825 a number of persons joined together, for the purpose of forming a socialist or communist society, under the superintendence of Mr. Robert Owen, the professed object of which was to promote the happiness of mankind. The company was to consist of shareholders, the shares being fixed at £250 (though after the formation of the company they were reduced to £200 each), and it being further agreed that for the first year no shareholder should be allowed to hold more than ten shares, but that after the lapse of one year from the formation of the society, such stock as should then be unappropriated might be disposed of among the members of the company. The capital was not to exceed £50,000. The company eventually purchased 280 acres of land from General Hamilton, at Orbiston, in Scotland, as the site of the proposed establishment, for which they consented to pay £19,995. This money was borrowed in three several sums of £12,000 from the Union Scotch Assurance Company, £3,000 from a Mr. Ainslie, and the remainder from another quarter. The articles of agreement were then drawn up. The right of voting was to be vested in the shareholders proportionately to

the amount of their respective shares. The necessary buildings were to be erected, and the necessary utensils supplied, and the company were to be empowered to borrow money upon the security of the joint property. Several trustees were named, the first being a Mr. Combe, to whom the estate was accordingly conveyed. The following are some of the general articles agreed on: "Whereas the assertion of Robert Owen, who has had much experience in the education of children, that principles as certain as the science of mathematics may be applied to the forming any general character, and that by the influence of other circumstances not a few individuals only, but the population of the whole world, may in a few years be rendered a very far superior race of beings to any now on the face of the earth, or who have ever existed, an assertion which implies that at least nine-tenths of the crime and misery which exist in the world have been the necessary consequence of errors in the present system of instruction, and not of imperfection implanted in our nature by the Creator, and that it is quite practical to form the minds of all children that are born so that at the age of twelve years their habits and ideas shall be far superior to those of the individuals termed learned men. . . . And that under a proper direction of manual labour Great Britain and its dependencies may be made to support an incalculable increase of population." The 21st article provided for a dissolution of the society if it should be found necessary: "That if, unhappily, experience should demonstrate to the satisfaction of the majority of proprietors that the new system introduced and recommended by R. Owen has a tendency to produce, in the aggregate, as much ignorance in the midst of knowledge, as much poverty in the midst of excessive wealth, as much illiberality and hypocrisy, as much overbearing and cruelty, and fawning and severity, as much ignorant conceit, as much dissipation and debauchery, as much filthiness and brutality, as much avarice and unfeeling selfishness, as much fraud and dishonesty, as much discord and violence, as have invariably attended the existing system in all ages, then shall the property be let to individuals acting under the old system, or sold to defray the expenses of the institution." In 1825 the society entered upon the estate, and the lands were divided among the tenants.

Among the original shareholders was the present demurring defendant, Cooper, who took one share, for which he paid £20 as an instalment, that he had borrowed from Mr. Hamilton, on the understanding that unless the loan were repaid by Cooper within two years, the property should belong to Mr. Hamilton. At the several meetings that subsequently took place Cooper did not attend, but deputed the trustee, Mr. Combe, to act for him, as he was permitted to do by the original agreement. In 1827 it was ascertained that the speculation did not answer, as the company was proved to be involved in debt to a considerable amount, so as to make it necessary that the property should be sold and the establishment broken up. Accordingly, in 1828, the sale of the estate was effected, and £15,000, the purchase-money, subject to certain deductions, transferred to the Scotch Assurance Company, as a repayment of their loan. A considerable balance of debts to other parties, however, still remained due, for which the shareholders became liable. Several suits were prepared in Scotch courts, during which the estates of the shareholders were declared liable, and several accordingly had paid much beyond what was due, proportionately on the amount of their shares. Of the original shareholders many were now dead, many out of the jurisdiction of the court, and many in hopelessly insolvent circumstances.—Mr. Rolt appeared in support of the demurrer.—In consequence of the absence of Mr. James Parker, who was engaged in the Lord Chancellor's Court, the further arguments were ordered to stand over. The "further arguments" I have not been able to procure.

The End of the Queenwood Community.—The reader has seen in the chapter on "Lost Communities" the closing days of Queenwood. Twenty years after, in 1865, a suit in Chancery being instituted, the property was sold and the assets distributed.

After paying the expenses allowed by the court and one creditor, who was held to be entitled to be paid in full to the extent of £15 10s. 10d., there remained for division £6,226 19s. 5d. amongst the several persons in the proportions hereunder mentioned.

All those who had to receive less than £10 obtained it from Messrs. Ashurst, Morris & Co., of 6, Old Jury, London; those whose dividends exceeded £10 received payment from the Accountant-General, on being identified by a solicitor upon such application.

The following is a list of the persons and amounts payable to them :—

	£	s.	d.
Joseph Craven and Mary Craven ...	16	7	8
Ann Craven	20	10	1
Green, Charles F. ...	11	13	6
Pare, William ...	191	17	5
William Pare... ...	2,679	14	5
Galpin, Thomas D. ...	1,020	15	3
Travis, Henry ...	205	1	0
Trevelyan, Arthur ...	41	0	2
Barton, J. W.... ...	82	0	2
Robinson, Thomas ...	4	19	4
Sutton, James W. ...	38	19	2
Scoular, William ...	4	2	0
Russell, Wallace ...	4	2	0
Stapleton, Joseph G....	1	8	4
Smith, Thomas ...	57	17	0
Tolmee, William F....	16	8	0
Marchant, Thomas F.	61	9	10
Marchant, Elizabeth	2	9	2
Dornbusch, George ...	55	7	2
Banton, William ...	0	8	2
Barnes, John	2	1	0
Bartlett, William ...	19	4	9
Barton, Charles ...	4	2	0
Beveridge, William S.	20	9	6
Betram, James ...	2	1	0
Berwick, John ...	4	1	10
Bracher, George ...	574	1	4
Buxton, John... ...	20	9	6
Clement, Charles ...	0	8	2
Collier, John	3	5	7
Dean, Hannah ...	4	2	0
Dean, Mary A. ...	4	2	0
Duly, Thos. & Mary A.	8	12	4
Farn, J. C.	6	2	10
Garside, John G. ...	8	12	3
Gooding, James ...	5	14	2
Green, James... ...	8	3	10
Hardy, Charles ...	2	18	6
McHugh, Sarah ...	27	16	6
Holloway, James H....	0	16	4
Holliday, John H. ...	0	8	2
Howard, Samuel ...	1	16	0
Howard, Ashton ...	1	16	0
Ironsides, Isaac ...	1	12	8
Jackson, John ...	28	18	7
Jackson, William ...	8	3	10
Jervis, James	4	1	6
Lauton, William ...	10	3	11
Lees, Robert	16	6	4
Matthison, Robert ...	8	3	2
Meadowcroft, William	3	16	8
Milson, John	2	0	9
Mellalieu, William ...	2	0	9
Messider, Isaac ...	0	8	2
Miller, Trusty ...	3	13	4
Paterson, Robert ...	3	16	4
Perry, James	6	2	4
Pilling, Andrew ...	3	12	7
Plant, James	2	0	9
Punter, William ...	21	12	4
Rhodes, William ...	0	8	2
Rhodes, William ...	1	12	7
Richard, James H. ...	11	6	6
Richard, James H. ...	11	6	6
Rose, William ...	1	12	7
Rose, William ...	8	3	2
Sturzaker, John ...	12	4	9
Sturzaker, Elizabeth	4	1	7
Trustees of Social Reformers' Benefit Society	20	9	7
Sturges, John... ...	26	12	8
Smithies, James ...	5	14	10
Simpson, George ...	16	16	6
Simpson, Thomas ...	5	6	9
Tapping, James ...	19	4	0
Tiffin, Charles ...	2	1	0
Walker, George ...	2	1	0
Wilson, Thomas ...	18	8	8
Whiteley, John ...	69	3	9
Watterson, William...	2	17	6
Wolfenden, Betsy ...	2	1	0
Wolfenden, William	1	4	6
Webley, John ...	3	13	2
Whitehead, John ...	0	8	2
Thomasson, Thomas	8	4	0
Mitchell, Samuel ...	0	12	4
Pearson, Charles, Executor of Elizabeth Pearson	86	0	10
Pearson, Charles, Administrator of Amelia Pearson	86	0	10
Gurney, John... ...	0	8	2
Carr, John	19	19	8
Trustees of the Hall of Science Building Society	12	6	5

	£	s.	d.
Boyce, James... ...	6	8	2
Browne, John ...	6	10	8
Healey, George ...	7	4	0
Harrison, Francis ...	2	9	2
Samuel, George W....	20	9	7
Lees, Thomas P. ...	8	4	0
Palmer, Edward ...	6	3	0
Robinson, Samuel ...	4	2	0
Smith, Samuel ...	2	0	9
Truelove, Edward ...	8	11	3
Black, Richard H. ...	265	11	0
The Trustee of the Good Samaritan Lodge of Odd Fellows of Manchester Union, Lodge 1337 ...	12	9	0
Ardhill, John... ...	41	4	0
The Trustees of Lodge No. 201 of the Order of Free Gardeners	4	17	0
Lamb, Lewis... ...	1	19	6
Batt, Philip; Whitely, Thomas; & Robinson, John, Executors of Hirstwood, R. ...	10	4	4
Ramdens, William ...	0	16	6
Shepherd, Samuel ...	1	4	8
Lees, Edward ...	0	8	2
	£6,226	19	5

The expenses incurred by Mr. Pare in carrying out this suit amounted to £360. The suits were conducted by Mr. George Davis of Mr. Ashurst's firm, and it was owing to his skill, resource, and mastery of the case that the money recovered reached so large an amount. The defaulting trustees endeavoured to defame the principles of Mr. Owen, and to prejudice the Master of the Rolls against the case; it was a matter of justice that they should be defeated. Sir John Romilly exceeded all that was to be expected of any judge, and he refused to allow the trustees to escape by these means, which in days not then long gone would have been successful. Mr. Davis's control of the case was surrounded with difficulties which would have deterred many solicitors, and placed the creditors who benefited by his judgment and success under great obligation to him.

Reciprocity in Shopkeeping.—Often contending that it was in the power of shopkeepers of wit to apply Co-operation to their own business, I wrote a circular for a Glasgow tea merchant, who had a large establishment at 508, Gallowgate, who preferred candour and business explicitness, setting forth the new method of dealing. Being the first document of the kind, it may be instructive to tradesmen. Mr. John McKenzie, the tea merchant in question, thus intoduced the principle of Reciprocity :—

"Every one, whether he has been in business or not, knows that the natural competition of trade keeps the shopkeeper's profits low; and if he makes any gift to his customers upon small purchases, he must be a loser by it. If, therefore, a

customer is offered such gifts, he has good reason to suppose that the articles he buys are inferior to what they ought to be, and if he does suppose it, he will commonly be right.

"The only way in which profits can be made in business is by numerous customers, and consequently large sales, which enable the shopkeeper to buy in the best markets. It is by this reciprocity alone that profit can arise which can be divided with purchasers. Therefore, if customers make purchases to the necessary amount, a real reciprocal plan of giving dividends on purchases can be carried out.

"The tea trade is one of the best fitted of any business for applying this reciprocity principle, and we have arranged to make the experiment for one year, dating from January, 1878.

"Therefore upon every purchase of tea of the amount of 4d. and upwards a metal warrant will be given, and when these warrants amount to 5s. a return will be made of 4d. in money, which amounts to a dividend of 1s. 4d. in the £ sterling.

"We prefer paying the dividend to purchasers in money as the honest way. When the public have the money in their hands they know that they have their money's worth, which they are not sure of when they are paid a dividend in articles of doubtful value and more doubtful use. We try this experiment because we think a practical and simple form of reciprocity is possible in shopkeeping, and believe that if the public understand it they will try it, and if they do try it they will find it satisfactory.

"The public are not generally aware what interest they have in buying the best teas. The Government duty is uniform, and is sixpence each pound weight upon good and bad teas alike; so that if a purchaser buys twenty shillings' worth of 'cheap' tea, at 1s. 8d. per pound, he pays six shillings in duty, or a Government tax of 30 per cent., while if he bought twenty shillings worth of very fine tea, at 3s. 4d. per pound, he only pays three shillings duty, or a Government tax of 15 per cent., and has the value of the other 15 per cent. in high quality. Thus the public, not being acquainted with the subject, buy 'cheap' tea, not knowing that it is the dearest tea, and not only dear, but often dangerous, and they are taxed enormously for drinking it. Whereas the best tea is not only greatly cheaper but a luxury to drink, and goes further, because

it has real quality. We have never sought to sell 'cheap' but 'good' teas. We have made our business by it, and we do not doubt being believed by any who make the experiment of buying from us.

"With accessible, convenient, and commodious premises, and a well-organised service, it is possible for us to sell a larger quantity of tea without increased expenses, and it is the profit upon increased sales, without increased expenses, that enables a dividend to be given. We can thus give (with a dividend of 1s. 4d. in the £) the same superior quality of tea which we have always supplied.

"This is our whole case. Were it not explained, the public might think it a new device to allure custom by seeming to make a gift for which the purchaser paid either in price or quality of the article he bought. Any sensible person can understand the good faith of the plan. We make no change in price—no change in quality. The dividend is given out of economy made by larger sales. It would be dishonest to promise what we could not perform, and foolish to promise what the public did not see could be performed. We have, therefore, frankly explained the grounds on which we ask the support of the public in this experiment of honest and substantial dividends in the tea trade, on the fair principle of reciprocity."

Progress of Co-operative Workshops.—The Marquis of Ripon's address to the Congress of Manchester, 1878, which drew attention to the tardy progress of Co-operative Production, increased public interest in it. As yet competitive employers in many towns are before co-operative employers in extending the participation of profits to labour. What visitors to Nottingham hear from workmen in Mr. Samuel Morley's lace factories in that town, would make a remarkable and pleasant chapter in the history of workshops. Some time ago I received from an eminent auctioneer's firm in London (Debenham and Storr) their scheme of the recognition of skill, goodwill, and assiduity in business among their employés, which had many equitable and kind features. The statement had been prepared for the Right Hon. W. H. Smith, who is known to have established similar arrangements in his great business.

Co-operation Proposed to Pope Pius IX.—Astute co-operators, with a turn of mind for State Socialism, followed in the footsteps of Mr. Owen, and sought to interest courts and clergy in their schemes. Mr. John Minter Morgan was so sanguine of this kind of success, that he sought an audience with the Pope in 1847. In May, 1846, he had held a public meeting in Exeter Hall, London, at which the Bishop of Norwich, Lord John Manners, and Sir Harry Verney were present. The object was to promote self-supporting villages for people destitute of employment. The number of persons in each village was to be 300, and £40,000 was the capital required for the undertaking. A vague reference occurred in the prospectus to "the period when the inmates would become proprietors"; but whether self-government was then to be a right was not mentioned. The village was to be a place under favourable conditions of religion, morals, health, and industry, into which people were to be invited to come and be good. There were to be two rulers, a resident clergyman and a director; and if they were genial and tolerant gentlemen, a pleasant tame life, undisturbed by Nonconformists or politics, could be had. The Secretaries of the scheme were the Rev. Edmund R. Larken, afterwards one of the principal proprietors of the *Leader* newspaper; the Rev. Joseph Brown, who gave poor London children happy days at Ham Common every year; and Mr. Morgan himself. If the projected villages were to be directed in the spirit of these gentlemen they would surely have been happy and popular. There were three bishops, those of Exeter, St. David's, and Norwich, Vice-Presidents of the Village Society. Considering how angry the Bishop of Exeter was at Mr. Owen's community schemes, it was a great triumph of Mr. Morgan to induce this bishop to be Vice-President of another. Lord John Manners, Mr. Monckton Milnes, M.P. (now Lord Houghton), the Hon. W. F. Cowper (now Mr. Cowper-Temple, M.P.) were upon the committee, which included eighteen clergymen. Though these probably had Church objects in view, the majority, like Mr. Cowper-Temple, whom we know as a real friend of Co-operation, were doubtless mainly actuated by a single desire to advance the social improvement of the people. Their prospectus said that "competition in appealing to selfish motives only, enrich-

ing the few and impoverishing the many, is a false and unchristian principle, engendering a spirit of envy and rivalry."

In 1847 Mr. Morgan carried his model and paintings[1] of his village scheme to Rome; he says contemptuously that "the British Consular Agent, being more favourable to Free Trade and the general principles of Political Economy, took no interest in the plan." At length Monsignor Corboli Bussi, Private and Confidential Secretary to the Pope, "devoted nearly an hour and a half to an examination of the plan, and informed Mr. Morgan that His Holiness would meet him at three o'clock or half-past three, as he descended to walk that day, February 23rd, 1847, and that Mr. Morgan was to attend on Monsignor Maestro de Camera, in his apartment a little before three."

On that afternoon the Peripatetic Communist and the Pope were to be seen in consultation together. His Holiness commended the object, and said the painting had been explained to him. Mr. Morgan asked the Pope to commend his plan to the Catholics. He said he would speak to Mr. Freeborn, the Consular Agent. Mr. Morgan wrote to that unsympathetic Consular Agent, who never replied. Then Mr. Morgan prayed Monsignor Bussi that "His Holiness should be pleased to direct that he, Mr. Morgan, should be honoured with a letter implying, in such terms as his superior wisdom and goodness would dictate, that the theory of the plan appeared to be unobjectionable, and that he would be glad to hear of experiments being made according to local circumstances." "Such a letter," Mr. Morgan added, "would not be incompatible with the rule which he understood His Holiness observed of not interfering with the temporal affairs of other countries."

Mr. Morgan's transparent painting was sent back to him with the civil intimation that the Holy Father and August Sovereign had "gone so far as to remit the printed exposition which accompanied Mr. Morgan's project to the examination of the Agricultural Commission, presided over by His Eminence Cardinal Massimo."

[1] Where are they now? They were of some merit as works of art, for Mr. Morgan was a gentleman of wealth and taste. They ought to be preserved in the Social Museum of the Central Board.

The Christian Village propagandist had interviews with Cardinal Massimo, and sent to the Pope the assurance that, "that which peculiarly distinguished the proposed Christian colony from the constitution of society in general, was the power which it afforded of maintaining the supremacy of religion, not only in theory and in precept, and in framing the laws and regulations, but by suppressing and prohibiting all institutions, practices, and influences calculated to impair the love of God and man as the ruling principle of action."

There is no more instructive example than this of what state or clerical socialism comes to. Never before was such a proposal carried to Rome by an English Protestant gentleman. It was an offer to place Co-operative Industrialism under the conditions of an absolute clerical despotism, which might include an Inquisition in every village. No poverty, no precariousness of competitive life is more abject or humiliating than this tutelage and control.

Mgr. John Corboli Bussi wrote Mr. Morgan from Quirinal Palace, April 18, 1847, saying, "Very willingly I will place under the eyes of His Holiness, my august sovereign, the note you have remitted: and afterwards, as I suppose, it will be communicated to the Agricultural Commission. But I am not able to foresee the result. Certainly I cannot but praise your moral principles and judgment, and I believe every generous and religious heart would partake of them. But as to the application of these principles to the economy of a country like ours I could not dare to have an opinion."

Thus ended the negotiations between Mr. Morgan and the Pope. Some respect is due to the Vatican for allowing the proposal made to it—to pass out of sight.

When old feudality disappeared, and the serf-class passed into dependence upon the capitalist class, anybody with eyes that could see social effects discerned that wages which gave industrial freedom would lead to growing intelligence and social aspiration, which being constantly checked by the powerful ambition of capital, there would be never-ending hostility between capital and labour. This opened a field which unscrupulous adventurers could enter and obtain a following, by promising workmen political deliverance. When working

people came to have votes, the same adventurers taught them distrust of their own efforts, distrust of the middle class, who were nearest to them in sympathy, and who alone stood between the people and the sole rule of the aristocracy. When this distrust was well diffused, these skilful professors of sympathy with the people asked for their confidence at the poll, which, as soon as it was obtained, they set up Personal Government, and put a sword to the throats of those who had given them power, as the Emperor Napoleon did. State Socialism means the promise of a dinner, and a bullet when you ask for it. It never meant anything else and never gave anything else. Co-operation is the discovery of the means by which an industrious man can provide his own dinner without depriving any one else of his.

CHAPTER XL

THE SONG OF STATE SOCIALISM

"Make no more giants, God,
But elevate the race at once."

ROBERT BROWNING.

FEUDALITY is not out of the bones of people in England, even now. Free workmen still expect from employers something of the gifts and care of vassalage, though they no longer render vassal service. Landlords still look for the allegiance of their tenants, notwithstanding that they charge them rent for their lands. In other countries, Despotism, tempered by paternal government, trains the people to look for State redress and State management. State Socialism seems one of the diseases of despotism, whose policy it is to encourage dependence.

The working man, with no fortune save his capacity of industry, lives under the despotism of Trade, which, better than the despotism of Government, leaves him the freedom of opportunity. He remains subject to the precariousness of hire. It is labour being imprisoned in the cage of wages, that has inclined its ear to the sirens of State Socialism. Ferdinand Lassalle, Karl Marx, and Lord Beaconsfield—three Jewish leaders whose passion has been ascendancy, have all sung in varying tunes the same song. Lassalle cried aloud to German workmen: "Put no trust in thrift. The cruel, brazen law of wages makes individual exertion unavailing. Look to State help." Marx exclaimed: "Despise this dwarfish redress the laves of capital can win." Disraeli sent the Young England party to offer patrician sympathy, maypoles, and charity. Auguste Comte proposed confidence and a plentiful trencher.

The Emperor Napoleon told French artisans that "Industry was a machine working without a regulator, totally unconcerned about its moving power, crushing beneath its wheels both men and matter." They were all known by one sign—Paternal Despotism. They all sang the same song—"Abjure politics, party, and self-effort, and the mill of the State, which we shall turn, will grind you benevolently in a way of its own." If the expression is allowable to me, I should say—God preserve working men from the "Saviours of Society."

"Property has its duties as well as its rights." If property is honestly come by, are we under the necessity or duty of parting with it? When something is required to be done for those who have no means of doing it for themselves, the richer people are now expected to assist in providing what is wanted. What is this but a humanitarian confiscation of the property of those from whom such help is extracted? What is this but industrial mendicancy on the part of those who receive it? Why should workmen need to stoop to this? Why should they not possess the means to provide themselves with what they need? A municipal town of independence, desiring some improvement, does not beg; it assesses itself for the expense. In the same manner, the working class anywhere, needing an institution, or an advantage, should do as co-operators do—pass a levy upon themselves—not pass round the hat to their richer neighbours. Has property intrinsic duties of charity? The poor have duties—and it is the first duty of the industrious poor not to be poor. Because of their helplessness now, the poor may accept the politic largesses of the rich; but they have no claim thereto. The obligation lies upon them always and everywhere to find out *why riches accumulate in other hands and not in theirs*, and to take immediate and persistent steps to amend the irregularity. The rich—if we except the "out-door relief" to the aristocracy, which Mr. Bright considers is dispensed at the Horse Guards and Admiralty—do not ask for State Socialism. Only men mendicant-minded do that, or ever think of it.

The policy of Liberalism is to encourage the people to owe everything to themselves. The policy of Conservatism is to impress the people with the belief that they owe everything to their superiors. By giving back to the people some of the money taken from them, these sort of rulers obtain the in-

fluence of donors, and conceal from the people that the money given them is their own.

State Socialism being a disease of some of the rich as well as of many of the poor, is not to be regarded as though it were necessarily a crime in artisans. The Socialists and Nihilists among workmen are not the dangerous class they are represented. A little outrage of speech or act on their part is made to go a long way by classes more dangerous than they, who, unwilling to accord redress, are glad of pretexts of repression.[1] Alarmed power has many friends. A great cry goes up in the Press against assassins, while few cry out against the oppression which creates the assassinations of despair. Irritated Paternal Government is ferocious. The "Father of his People" in Russia will commit more murders in a day than all the Nihilists in the empire in a generation.

Despotic "Order" has its Robespierres as well as Anarchy. The armed and conspiring Buonapartes, Bismarcks, and Czars are bloodier far than the impotent and aspiring poor.

The conditions of the many predispose them to distrust. Mr. Mill has described them in a comprehensive passage :—

"No longer enslaved or made dependent by force of law, the great majority are so by force of poverty. They are still chained to a place, to an occupation, and to conformity to the will of an employer, and debarred from advantages which others inherit without exertion, and independently of desert."[2]

This class of persons, dependent on the mercy, caprice, or necessities of capital, have a very bad outlook. Hopeless men are always disposed to listen to any proposal of arranging things on their behalf. To such persons the idea of looking for help within their own order does not occur to them. They see no avenue of self-help open to them. If they did, they would not be despairing.

In the meantime the State—not a thing independent of the people, but a system under the control of the people—should

[1] Many things which never happened are attributed to Socialists and Nihilists. Some of them are furious enough, like the Fenians, to claim untraced crimes as acts of their side—it aiding their policy of terror without increasing their danger. In Germany, where liberty is regulated by troopers, in Russia, where the succession to the crown is adjusted by murder, any popular movement may be expected to be imitative of its superiors.

[2] "Socialism." *Fortnightly Review*, March, 1879.

have charge only of those general interests which from time to time may be committed to it. If towns may acquire lands for free parks, provide free libraries, free education (for a time), tolless roads, improved streets, acquire waterworks, gasworks, and taverns, the State may take upon itself other limited public duties, and organise railway transit, and even acquire the land, using the increment in its value for national expenditure, as the public welfare may determine.

Free Government is yet in its infancy, and the line is not yet traced between State action and local life. Many consider that the State may represent the uniformity of law, protection, order, right, and national economy; while Social life should keep free, industry, conscience, education, individuality, and progress. Of one thing we are sure, that the world has been too much governed by persons whose talent has lain chiefly in taking care of themselves. There have always been too many people ready to regulate society in their own interests, whereas the welfare of the world lies in the direction of self-government. Humanity has been too much sat upon by rulers—Heaven-born and Devil-born—the latter class chiefly prevailing. The far-seeing prayer of Browning—that God should make no more giants, but elevate the race at once—should be put up in all the churches. What we want in society is no leadership save that of thought—no authority save that of principles—no laws save those which increase honest freedom—no influence save that of service. The English working class, if not brilliant, have a steady, dogged, unsubduable instinct of self-sufficiency in them. Being a self-acting race, they are alike impatient of military or spiritual mastery, or paternal coddling, and in their crude but manly and ever-improving way they make it their business to take care of the State, and not to call upon the State to take care of them.

PART III

From 1876 to 1904



WALTER MORRISON.

[*To face p.* 613.

To

WALTER MORRISON

OF MALHAM TARN

TO WHOM CO-OPERATION OWES MORE

THAN IT KNOWS

FOR SERVICE AND SACRIFICE

CHAPTER XLI

TRANSFORMATION OF SOCIAL AIMS

ALL the fervour and earnestness of early Co-operative Societies was not, as the reader has seen, about Co-operation, as it is now known, but about communistic life. The "Socialists," so frequently heard of then, were Communists. They hoped to found voluntary, self-supporting, self-controlled, industrial cities, in which the wealth created was to be equitably shared by all whose labour produced it. Participation was to be the cardinal principle of the new Socialist organisation of society. As the expense was beyond the means of the people, Mr. Owen proposed that the funds should be supplied by the State. He sought State-initiation—not State support—as these cities were to be self-sustained. Whether communities so originated would end in State control of production and distribution appears never to have been discussed, as no State took the steps proposed.

In the "Socialist" agitation taken up by the people, the State was left out and the people came in. Their communities were intended to be independent and controlled by the residents for themselves.

This scheme of communist life was sometimes spoken of under the name of "Co-operation," as indicating that the exertions of all must be *co-operant* to the common good.

The theory of equitable Co-operation is—in the workshop—5 per cent. to capital, to the customers what may be necessary, 5 per cent. to education, 10 per cent. to labour. In the store—5 per cent. to capital, 5 per cent. to

education, 10 per cent. to customers, and the same to all in the employ of the store.

Capital and custom are always trade charges. Other divisions are made out of profit and vary as the members direct.

The Rochdale Pioneers founded a new form of Co-operation; their inspiration was communistic. They were all of that persuasion. Their intention was to raise funds for community purposes. It was because they had these aims that they provided for education. They carried participation into the workshop, as their object was the emancipation of labour from capitalist exploitation. They had no idea of founding a race of grocers, but a race of men. Communism suffered incarnation in their hands, and the new birth was the co-operative store—a far lesser creation; still that was much. It put honesty into trade, and increased means to countless families.

Classification of Stores.—The rise of Distributive Co-operation warrants the division of commercial enterprises into public and private trading. Co-operators are public traders, who take their customers into partnership. Private traders are they who conduct their business for their own personal advantage.

Co-operative Stores may be regarded as divisible into Dark Stores, Twilight Stores, and Sunrise Stores. The "Dark" Stores are those which give no share of profits to those they employ—give credit—which keeps up the habit of indebtedness in their members—and have no education fund in their rules. The "Twilight" stores are those which have some features or others of a "Sunrise" Store, but not all. "Sunrise" Stores are those which have the cardinal features of ready-money dealing, provision for intelligence, and who give the same dividend on the wages of all their employés as they give to the consumer who purchases at their counter. If "Sunrise" Stores increase it will be owing to the Women's Guilds, when they understand what true Co-operation means. If a man accepts a principle and finds it takes trouble to put it into practice, he explains it away, and says he carries it out—when he does not—and his assurances satisfy the male mind. But you cannot fool a woman this way. She expects a right principle to be acted upon, and she will not, if she knows it, connive at its evasion. It has been no uncommon thing to hear heads of departments,

who never put participation into operation, loudly declare themselves in favour of it—provided it is not to be carried out. They do not say so, but that is their meaning, judged by their conduct. These evaders would never impose on a congress of women who had thought upon the subject.

CHAPTER XLII

GROWTH OF SOCIETIES

"It is not by the purity of the sinless alone, that progress is advanced. It was not by the monk in his cell, or the saint in his closet, but by the valiant worker in humble sphere and in dangerous days, that the landmarks of liberty were pushed forward."—W. R. GREG.

English Co-operative Wholesale Society.—First in magnitude is the Co-operative Wholesale Society of Manchester, familiarly known as the "C.W.S." It publishes an annual volume, of pictorial and literary interest. It is also the statistical authority of the extent of the Co-operative movement. The reader has seen a table of the progress of the Wholesale Society from 1864 to 1877 (p. 357). Its amazing growth is shown in the statement published on its authority in the *Co-operative News*, June 23, 1904. (See opposite page.)

The business and possessions of this great society annually increase.

The Scottish Wholesale Society.—The Scottish Wholesale Society was founded in 1872. True to the traditions of Co-operation in Scotland—the scene of great manufacturing triumph—at New Lanark the Society accorded a share of profits to the workers it employed. Though not enough to be much of an inspiration to workers, it recognises the principle of participation, which is creditable to the sense of honour and equity, associated with the Scottish character. In the Table of Great Societies given elsewhere it will be seen that the Glasgow Distributive Society gives the same dividend to its workers as to the consumers. There are in Scotland several co-partnership manufacturing societies. It is a great merit in the Scottish Wholesale Society that it has never assumed the character of a mere

THE

CO-OPERATIVE WHOLESALE SOCIETY

Founded 1864, in MANCHESTER, it has now Branches at NEWCASTLE and LONDON.

Depôts and Salerooms:

Bristol, Cardiff, Northampton, Birmingham, Blackburn, Huddersfield, Leeds, Nottingham, and Longton.

Is a Federation of

1,133 Retail . . Societies.

Representing a Membership of

1,445,099

Persons.

Owning 8 Steamships,

11 Foreign and 4 Shipping & Forwarding Depôts,

4 Irish Depôts,

38 Creameries (with 50 Auxiliaries),

2 Fruit Farms,

Tea Estates in Ceylon,

And 50 Productive Departments.

Annual Sales: 20 Millions

Total Sales,

— £ —

245,893,759

Total Profits,

— £ —

3,706,924

And a Banking Turnover of

87 MILLIONS

Its Boot Works are at Leicester, Heckmondwike, Enderby, and Rushden, and it makes more than **2,000,000** pairs yearly.

EMPLOYING IN ALL ITS DEPARTMENTS

NEARLY 15,000 PERSONS

consumers' association, making the consumer the unit of co-operative effort—which the late Judge Hughes used to call "a Gut's Gospel." It recognises labour as also worthy of consideration, which gives an honest flavour to all their productions, and makes Shieldhall, where their principal factories are, historic ground, which the co-operative traveller visits with pride. The Scottish Wholesale is remarkable for the efficiency and economy of its administration, which is no mean one in extent. The following are its statistics for 1904:—

Number of Co-operative Societies	322
Number of Members	288,395
Amount of Capital—Share and Loan	£5,219,022
Reserve Funds	£376,327
Amount of Trade	£15,309,163
Profits earned, including interest	£1,849,885

The Great Baking Society of Glasgow.—When the Great United Baking Society of McNeil Street, Glasgow, began in 1869 (the year of the first Co-operative Congress in London)[1] in South Coburg Street, Glasgow, it employed one man. In 1904 it employed 1,102. The Society has a capital of £3,300. It has reserves of £30,000. The trading profits average over £40,000 a year, £6,000 of which goes to the employés in addition to their wages, and £34,000 goes to purchasers. In 1903, 131 societies were members of it, and their sales amounted to £422,700.

From time to time attempts have been made by some who seem to regard Co-operation as a predatory movement, to steal from the hard-working bakers their share of profits, and reduce them to the level of hired labourers in capitalistic workshops. What right has the well-fed consumer—whose chief service to the movement is eating for it—to the profits of the workman who labours for it?

The chief Bakery of the Society in McNeil Street is allowed by traders to be the greatest in the world, as well as being a notable structure. Their new Bakery in Belfast is also of fine aspect, as are some of their branches in Scotland. It is singular that in Scotland, where parsimony in building would be expected,

[1] The reader will see that the Royal Arsenal Society of Woolwich began in the same year, which is foremost among English Societies for its Sunrise system of participation.

they have erections, as in Glasgow, of great architectural beauty.

Rochdale Equitable Pioneers.—Taking a typical selection of the chief societies in the order of their ages, Rochdale comes first, as its institution of participation with its members created a new order of societies. The story of the Rochdale Society of Equitable Pioneers is familiar throughout the co-operative world. The reader will find its career recounted in Chapter XVII. The table of their progress shows that in 1876 the number of members was 8,892—their funds were £254,000, their business amounted to £305,190, and their profits to £50,668.

In 1904 the number of members were 11,986, the amount of funds was £223,313, the amount of business £251,398, and the profits £36,454, exclusive of interest paid to members. The Education Fund was £769 in 1903. In 1905 increasing prosperity was setting in.

In opening the new Offices in 1893, Mr. Kershaw, the President, stated that during the fifty-three years of its existence the society had done a total business of £10,341,458, and paid its members interest and profits £1,588,400.

Rochdale Provident Society.—That the original Rochdale Society has not grown as many other societies have, continuously, is partly owing to the lack of a contiguous population, which has given to some other towns opportunities of indefinite expansion; the Equitable Pioneers, however, appears to represent the ethical co-operative element in the town.

It must be taken into account that Co-operation, in one form or other, has a large prevalence in Rochdale. A rival society has been running for many years, which owed its origin to the success of the Equitable Society. Readers of the "History of the Pioneers" are aware that for a long time parliamentary candidates, Mr. Cobden especially, were vehemently opposed by the Conservative party, because of friendliness to local co-operators. At length, in 1870, Conservatives contributed to the formation of a new association, which bore the name of the "Provident Co-operative Society," which now occupies a considerable building in Lord Street. A late report shows that it has a capital of £139,000, and 9,000 members. It professes to be "established for the social

advancement of its Members," but it is very economical in promoting it. It has no educational department, its twenty-seven branches have no news-room, it has no library, it maintains no scientific classes, it copies the business features of its great predecessor, but gives no pledge of honesty in dealing and genuineness of commodities. Its aim appears to be to make dividends free from the impediment of ethical restrictions. Its members derive business benefits from dealing with it, and obtain good dividends on their purchases. They owe their advantages to the Pioneers, who taught them that Co-operation was a method of material improvement. The Provident is run upon the sordid lines of mere commercialism. Its fiscal administration was borrowed from the Equitable Society in whose service its first manager was for several years, and who left because his proposed methods of business were thought undesirable. Many members of the Equitable Society are also members of the Provident, which, of course, diminishes the sales of the Equitable, and accounts for the reduction of its profits over former years. This Provident Society is not co-operative, but a cheap selling store.

The Leeds Industrial Society.—The giant store at Leeds, the largest of all, arose in many contentions and was blown into substantiality by tornadoes of debate of many years' duration. The society commenced in 1847, incited by chance reports of the Rochdale Pioneers, who were then only in the third year of their operations. Leeds had been for some time the centre of the Socialist agitation, and had more persons of enthusiasm and initiative ability in it than any other town.

The earlier years of the society were the most turbulent of any in store history. Its dramatic story is told in its Jubilee History and need not be repeated here. The society began with fifty-eight pioneers and arose out of Flour. The adulteration and dearness of that article was a very serious thing when the co-operators began to deliver the town from the costly peril. It celebrated its jubilee in 1897. Though vast it is not a Sunrise store, and shares no profits with shopmen or workers—it brought great saving to the people and much social improvement. Shorter hours of attendance came to every shop server in Leeds, through the influence of the example of the great store, and had it thought of endowing

its many workpeople it would have been richer than it is, and brought gladness to the workshops throughout the North of England. Leeds would then be a proud name in Co-operation. It is now merely a great one.

The magnitude of the society is shown in the fact that it has 49,340 members. At the end of 1904 the net profits for the year exceeded £200,000, in addition to £26,000 paid as interest on capital. The produce of the corn mill appears to have amounted to 158,000 bags, which Dominie Sampson would declare a "prodigious" output. The sales for the year 1904 exceeded £1,525,000.

After thirty-nine years' debate (for the question of the intelligence of the members was always in the minds of the best friends of the society) a resolution was carried to devote ¾ per cent. of the profits to education, which, the profit being so large, gives the handsome sum of £1,500 for the year. Thus the society emerged from the Dark store stage, but not with impetuosity, it must be owned. It has more than ten productive departments. It has added streets of admirable houses to the town. Its members and its administration comprise a little nation. It has a great secretary in John W. Fawcett. Its many and far-extending branches are without parallel in co-operative annals. Its Jubilee History exceeds in dramatic incidents that of any other. It publishes a monthly *Record*, remarkable for quantity, quality of its paragraphs, and variety of its information. It is edited by Mr. John Fawcett.

The Great Derby Society. — The Derby Society has a romantic history. It began in 1850, through reports of a wandering carpenter made at the House of Call. He had been in Rochdale and noted the success of the new store there, which had been in operation for six years. Derby workmen thought they could do what Rochdale workmen had done, and they commenced a store, which burrowed in alleys that had no thoroughfare and finally emerged from dark retreats into open day and opulent streets. It possesses now the most imposing business property in the best part of the town, and had a membership in 1904 of 18,676. Its sales for 1904 amounted to £455,290. It paid an annual dividend to members of £56,875, £1,063 to employés, and £578 to education. The society's land and business premises have cost £181,853;

its various holdings being sixty-four in number, consisting of houses, warehouses, grocery shops, meat shops, bakeries, stables, builders' yard, and dairies. It takes two days of swift riding to visit the whole of them. The operations and extent of this society are marvellous in their variety and interest. Derby was the third store that celebrated its jubilee. I had then the pleasure of writing its history as well as the Jubilee History of Leeds. Both little volumes are plentifully illustrated, and comprise more incidents, more dramatic experience, more vicissitudes and triumphs of industrial enterprise than many other books on Co-operation. Long ago Derby procured from a Norman king a Charter for keeping ideas out of the town. It succeeded in being for centuries the most stationary, insipid, vacant-minded town in the kingdom. The only instance of independence in those days was that of a blind girl who refused assent to the doctrine of the Real Presence, for which she was burnt alive. But Thought was too strong for the Charter. It did not for ever keep out ideas, and made amends by giving birth to William Hutton, an original historian, and to Herbert Spencer, the prince of scientific thinkers, and putting into practice Co-operation on a splendid scale.

The Oldham Industrial Society.—One is named the Industrial, situated in King Street, and the Equitable on Greenacres Hill, commonly spoken of as the "King Street Store" and the "Greenacres Store." The Industrial is a year older than the Equitable, and is still the larger of the two.

The Industrial Society commenced in 1850, and held its Jubilee in 1900. As its first year's dividend amounted to £120 it probably had 240 members, but no record exists of them. In 1905 its members numbered 14,996. The share capital in 1850 was £462. In 1905 it amounted to £159,819. In the first year, as we have said, it paid £120 in dividends. In 1905 its estimated dividend would be £94,488, nearing £100,000. Its sales for 1904 were £516,284. The dividend of members is 3s. in the £. Grants to education average £2,000 a year. Its sheet almanac gives engravings of three fine buildings, the Central Stores and two noble branches, but which is which is not indicated. Of course all the members know, but the almanac compilers commonly forget that it is consulted in distant places, and often in distant lands,

where no local knowledge can assist the curious reader. This society has its news-rooms in Foundry Street, and in the branch stores, supplied with all the principal newspapers, open daily and free to all the members and their families. It has a library of 17,500 volumes. The store has twenty-seven branches. Its quarterly report is the most portable, simple, and intelligible of any.

Fifty years is the appointed period of deliverance for Jews. In these later days it is considered the allotted period of a movement after which it may be said to enter a future life. So little did many of our societies expect to attain the longevity of a jubilee that they kept no records of the experience of their youth.

The Oldham Equitable Society.—The Equitable, Mr. James Wood informs me, has no authentic record for the first twenty years of its proceedings. In 1870 it had 1,965 members—in 1904 it had 12,368. In 1870 it had six branches—in 1904 it had twenty branches. In 1870 its net profits were nearly £7,000—in 1904 they exceeded £43,000. In 1870 its honourable grant to Education was £136, which increased every year, until in 1903 it reached the sum of £1,260. Between 1870 and 1903 its Educational grants amounted to £30,000. Mr. James Wood has been its Secretary since 1870, a period of thirty-four years—which is one answer to those who think that democratic service must be fitful, short, and precarious.

The Halifax Society.—Halifax was the first store after Rochdale which excited public attention and hope. I spent a week at the store, in which a room was assigned me, where I wrote the History of the society down to 1866. In consequence of reports I made to Mazzini and Prof. F. W. Newman, they wrote to the members letters memorable to this day. They appear with other incidents in the history of the marvellous career of the earlier days of the society. In 1901 was published its Jubilee History, which does not give the members a vivid idea of the brave men and true men who made the fortune of the store of which they are so justly proud. Mr. M. Blatchford, the writer, speaks of "his entire ignorance of the history of the society." It would be unfair to say that his pages justify his confession, for he has produced a book of much

historic interest. The society, which began in 1851 in financial nothingness, was rich in that faith in self-help which has produced all our great societies. The Halifax Society possessed at the time of its Jubilee thirty-four branches. In 1904 the number of members was 10,691, the sales for 1904 were £312,911, the share capital was £121,875, and the profit, including interest to members, was £46,481—the dividend to members was 2s. 9d. in the £, for Education a grant of £115 is accorded. The number of persons in the employ of the society are 330. But to these, although the members are working men themselves, they give no share of the profits they help to make by their fidelity and labour.

The first history of the Halifax Society I dedicated—

To
HORACE GREELEY,
The eminent American journalist,
Who has ever welcomed in the United States of America
Systems of Self-help for the People,
Which he has himself advanced by a generous advocacy,
And illustrated by an unrivalled career.

Manchester and Salford Society.—Few are aware that there is a Sunrise store in Manchester. The great Co-operative Society of the City and Salford situated in Downing Street is of this class. Mr. Charles Wright calls it the "Acorn" store, which —owing in no mean measure to his services as its secretary—is now an Oak store. The "Acorn" was sown at 169, Great Ancoats Street, in June, 1859. It began more hopefully than most stores. It had 111 members and a capital of £289. Its sales in the first week were £32. The rent of their shop was only £13, yet its receipts for the first complete year were £7,687. Then as now there was generous sentiment in Manchester, which believed that industrial rightness could be trusted in the market. There was a Roby Brotherhood then, connected with the Roby Chapel in Piccadilly of that city, and on Christmas Eve, 1859, they held a meeting and decided to begin a Manchester and Salford Equitable, that they might work for the good of each and all. It was this spirit which made the society successful. Members who were living at its commencement gratefully recall every Christmas Eve when

"Peace and Goodwill" came to them through the noble aspirations of the Roby Brotherhood.

Like Rochdale, the Manchester and Salford Society took the name of Equitable, and in consistency to the name commenced, in 1872, to share profits with its employés, which now number 600, who from that date to March, 1905, have received £20,581. Up to March, 1905, that society has spent on educational purposes £14,940. Blessed are the words Equity and Brotherhood. The oak growth of the "Acorn" society is evident in the fact that its capital (March, 1905) was £221,550, its roll of members 16,521, its yearly sales average £370,088. Its bread sales are over 24,000 4-lb. loaves a week. It owns 79 horses, 81 vehicles, 34 10-ton coal waggons for bringing coal direct from the collieries, property in the city and suburbs which has cost £107,387. It paid £8,121 interest to its members in 1904, and £38,440 in dividends. Since the society began (1859 to 1905) its business has amounted to nearly £9,000,000. Members have received nearly £192,000 in interest, and in dividend £792,000. The society counts as a distinction that among its members have been Mr. E. V. Neale, Dr. John Watts, Sir Edward Watkin, and Henry Pitman, editor of the *Co-operator*.

There was an earlier Manchester and Salford Industrial Society before 1859. It had a shop at 519, Ashton Old Road, Openshaw, and one in Ardwick, with a stone beehive over the door. The beehive was still there in 1878, but over a toffee shop.

Like Leeds, the Manchester Society has a monthly *Herald*, alike notable for wisdom of suggestions and amplitude of information. Its editor was Mr. Charles Wright, and its pages under his successor, Mr. Harold Denham, display like quality.

Bolton.—*Great and Little Societies.*—It is good to come upon a real "Sunrise" store. There are two Boltons—Great and Little. The store bears both names. It began in 1859. How odd that news of the Rochdale Pioneers had effect in Leeds when they were but three years old, and after six years' progress inspired Derby with action. News of their example never reached Bolton until the Rochdale Society was fifteen years old. That was two years after the appearance of their history. But no great society, save Woolwich, has so

improved on the Rochdale system. Bolton surpasses Leeds, and Derby surpasses Leeds, and Barnsley British does nothing for labour. Bolton gives its employés more than £3,000, and a similar sum for Education. Bolton is a true Sunrise store. It has a real claim upon the zeal and thoughtfulness of its servants which no store has which excludes them from participation in the profits they assist to make. The members find a response to their act of justice, for their dividend on purchases is 3s. in the £. Their share capital is £651,655. Trade exceeds £789,753. The members number 31,369, whose profits are nearly £115,000. Its premises are fine, it has branches and productive works, and gives liberally to public objects. Mr. Beckett was long one of their chief officers.

Bolton, in the nobility of its citizens, is fortunate and distinguished. It is there Free Trade was born, and Thomas Thomasson was its inspirer. He was the only manufacturer in the North who understood Political Economy as a commercial science ; at least, if any one else did so, it did not transpire in a public way. With him freedom of trade was not a mere theory—it was a passion. He felt that national prosperity depended on it. He was the inciter and counsellor of Cobden and Bright. In noble gifts he was as unsectarian as his principles. He was happy in descendants of like quality. His son, John Pennington Thomasson, gave great gifts to the town and store. He built and furnished the Thomasson Co-operative Institute, which consists of men and women's reading-rooms, smoke-room, and bath-rooms, and undertook to supply the rooms with papers, magazines, and to bear all charges of rates, taxes, lighting, and heating. The Bolton Co-operative Society is responsible for the management. Working women never had such dainty accommodation as they enjoy in Bolton, which they owe to Mrs. J. P. Thomasson's kindly forethought and device. Mr. Franklin Thomasson, the surviving representative of the family, sustains its noblest traditions.

The Great Plymouth Store.—Plymouth stands next in the order of honour and time. It commenced in 1860. Its origin was humble and hopeless. Of the three founders, Reynolds, Webb, and Goodanew, I knew the last best, who was good enough for anything that required faith and courage.

When I first spoke to him about forming a store he was a small, dark-haired, bright-eyed, ardent man, a shoemaker, following his trade in a small book-shop so crowded with unsold publications—radical and freethought—that he seemed to be buried in them. Now a noble pile of buildings, with a notable architectural skyline, represents the great store in Frankfort Street, the freehold costing nearly £40,000, the total value of their freeholds being £220,355. There are thirty-six branches and departments. Their members numbered in March, 1905, 34,880; the receipt for goods for the year 1904 was £650,931. They have the old pioneer rule of 2½ per cent. for Education, which for the first quarter of 1905 amounted to £615—at the rate of £2,460 a year—a share of profits to employés at the rate of £3,200 a year. Mr. W. H. Watkin, manager of the store dairy, informs me that it can be said of its cream, "that it is produced in a co-operative dairy, by co-operative employés, with co-operative appliances, and from co-operative milk; that the milk comes from co-operative cows, fed on co-operative grass, grown on co-operative land." In a further letter Mr. Watkin adds, what ought to be recorded in honour of this great profit-sharing society: "Our milk vendors are paid a minimum of 24s. per week. This is between 4s. and 7s. above the pay of that class of man in the town. In addition to this they are allowed a commission on all milk sold above a weekly quantity of 110 gallons. Some men increase their weekly earnings 25 per cent. in this way, and still in addition to this they participate in the general bonus allowed to employés out of the profits made by the society, which bonus now amounts in the aggregate to considerably over £2,000 per annum. The total number of employés is about 1,000."

The Leicester Society.—This live co-operative town is a seat of productive societies. Its co-operative distributive store began in 1860–1. Faithful adherents brought it through years of precariousness and vicissitude. The idea of commencing a society originated around a factory stove fire. An authorless, well-illustrated book tells its curious story. Being a yearly visitor to Leicester from 1843, I used to look in the successive shops in which they did business, assured of their progress, as I was that of the Hosiery Society, which commenced ten years

later, of which George Newell was the inspirer—bright, ardent, cheery, and picturesque, with few parallels anywhere.

Not till the third year of the existence of the store did its members amount to 180. No one among them had any belief that the experience of their early days would be of interest in the future. No record of it was made. Now they own commanding premises in Union Street, and in 1905 the members numbered 18,800, their total capital is £216,855, their trade for 1904 £442,151. The profit made since their commencement is £563,302. They have spent upon their Education Department £10,828. The award to Education is by rule 1¼ per cent., yielding an average of £650 a year. The employés of this great store number 350, who participate in its profit to the extent of half the dividend (2s. 6d. in the £ paid to members), averaging £1,600 a year. The seal of the store includes views of trade, commerce, and manufacture, surrounded by the words "Equitable Participation," words used by no other society, and the store goes half-way in fulfilment of it in its recognition of the rights of labour. The Leicester store stands in the list of the "Sunrise" societies.

The Barnsley British Society.—There was a co-operative store in Barnsley recorded in Baine's Directory in 1822, the year after the beginning of stores represented in the *Economist* of 1821. The Barnsley Store began among the weavers of "Barebones." Bare bones were plentiful among weavers in those days. The "Barebone" store had life in it, for it lasted up till 1840, and had a library of seventy-two volumes, which perhaps accounts for its vitality. In 1862 the present Barnsley British Society originated at Tinker's Temperance Hotel in "Bleak Barnsley," as Lister, the poet, calls the town. The 1862 society was mainly prompted by George Adcroft, a collier, a strong man, of strong character and strong co-operative conviction, a bold and ready speaker. It was a grocer who let them the house in which Co-operation awoke after a Rip van Winkle sleep of twenty-two years. It has now many departments and important productive works. In their yearly balance sheet, December, 1904, the sales of the corn mill exceeded £180,000, those of mineral waters are set down at £3,894, and the bakery sales at £6,000. They give with heartiness 1 per cent. of the net profits to Education, £758 for the year. The

members exceed 21,000. Their yearly profits amount to £115,320. They employ 665 persons, and accord them no share of the profit they help to make.

The society celebrated its fortieth year of its successful existence by publishing in 1902 a Coronation History of it. It is a sensibly-written history notwithstanding its regal title. There are no less than sixty-nine illustrations of stores and portraits, the last of which is Thomas Lister, whose friendship I was proud to share. He sacrificed a valuable appointment rather than take an oath. The Coronation History discloses that during forty years all the presidents were one-initial men. During the first fifteen years only one member of committee was elected who had two initials. Out of seventy-one managers sixty-one are one-initial men. In America every man would have had three initials. Is it in this way they seek to show themselves to be British?

All I can learn of the reason for the singular name, "Barnsley British," is that the Registrar had on his list another Barnsley Society, and suggested the term British. He might as well have selected Barnsley Bacon,[1] whereas every society in in Great Britain is British.

The Stockton-on-Tees Society.—The Stockton Provident Society may be taken as an illustration of the rise and progress of many great stores, which to enumerate would convert these pages into a catalogue. The Stockton store commenced in 1865, under the usual conditions of resourcelessness and obscurity, at a meeting at the Unicorn Inn. Its originators were inspired by the history of the Rochdale Pioneers. Its growth may be shown in a few lines. In 1876 the number of members was 1,975. That year the profits were £1,894. For the ten years ending in 1904 the profits made were £277,284, and the members advanced to 10,901. The employés receive no share of profits, and the grant for educational purposes is fixed at the timorous amount of ½ per cent. of the profits. In the two years ending 1904 the trade of the society has increased 20 per cent., when they began extending their operations to baking, building, plumbing, joinering, painting, and paper-hanging. They have acquired land, and are erecting new

[1] Bacon, after the great Lord of that name, might have given Barnsley a porcine rivalry with Chicago.

branches, business having outgrown the old ones. They have negotiated for land for the erecting of two hundred or more houses. The society has thirteen branches, a flour mill, coal, and meat depôts, and rents a farm of 115 acres. Last year a wise and informing address, made at the request of the society, and giving a vivid history of it, was delivered by the Secretary, George A. McEwen, who has been for years in the service of the society.

The Royal Arsenal Society.—The Royal Arsenal Co-operative Society takes rank as a noble Sunrise store. It was constructed and inspired by the genius of a Scotsman, Alexander McLeod. On his death, a grateful society put up a statue to his memory,—the only instance in which a store has thus perpetuated the memory of its founder. Yet this great store had a pitiful beginning. Its first quarter's profit was only £1 18s. 11d., its second quarter gave £4 10s. 2d.; its third quarter yielded £7 8s. 7½d.; while the fourth quarter fell to £6 0s. 5¼d. The first year of storekeeping yielded only £19 18s. 1¾d. It was not until the end of the year that a dividend of 6d. in the pound was declared, and the whole of the fixtures, £7 11s., were depreciated at 100 per cent. This prudent decision was owing to the judgment of Mr. McLeod, as the amount of its profits was owing to his devotion. He went up to London to buy the stock, brought it down with him, and carried it from the station to the store, to diminish the expense.

The society commenced in 1869, the year of the first Congress. The number of members then was 47. Now in 1905 there are 24,120. The original capital of the society was £27. It is now £352,259. Its sales are £500,000. Its members' dividends amount now—1905—to £38,219, besides paying £16,173 interest. The payment of profit to employés commenced in 1873. The amount then was £1 4s. 9d. It is now £2,990, which is shared alike by all—manager and labourer, men and women, youths and girls, in every department, factory, and farm—every one finds pleasure and profit in working in such a co-operative society.

The education fund, which begun in 1877, amounted to £20 10s. 6d. then, and is now £1,032 a year.

The Central Stores are architecturally the largest and most

imposing in England or Scotland, and are surmounted by a fine cupola clock tower. The effect of this fine building was notable. Since its opening in October, 1903, the society has experienced an increase of from £800 to £900 per week. In 1904 the increase rose to an average of nearly £1,500 per week, an increase of nearly £83,000 per year, and the increase goes on.

The Lardale Road and Belvedere branches are fine buildings, with handsome spiral clock-towers. Scotland has nothing finer to show. This may be owing to Scotch inspiration—seeing Mr. McLeod was the master-spirit of this remarkable society.

In 1885 the Society purchased the Bostall Farm, lying at the foot of Bostall Wood. In 1900 they bought the Bostall Estate. The houses erected for members are delightfully situated. During the two years—1903–4—they erected and sold 250 houses. But to name all the notable features of this society would be to write its history instead of a passing notice.

On the death of Mr. McLeod, he was succeeded by Mr. T. G. Arnold, in whose capacity his distinguished predecessor had great confidence. Under his direction all the departments continue to flourish. The great branches are ten in number, and are increasing.

The Single Store in Herefordshire.—Co-operative sowers need not lose heart, though they find only one spot of good soil in a county in which their seed will germinate. It appears that in 1886 a single seed took root in Hereford, Mr. J. Thomas, now president, being the chief sower. On no other place in the whole of Herefordshire had co-operative seed taken root. At Leominster, fourteen miles away, the soil was thought favourable, but no seed would germinate there. Nevertheless in Hereford a few true men have established a substantial store on an historic site in Widemarsh Street, where they do a trade of £350 a week. The Rev. C. P. Wilson, who is remembered with great respect by the Society, was an important friend to it, and for two or three years its president. Since the commencement of the society in 1886 it has paid its members £1,270 in interest and £5,000 in dividends.

Some Jubilee Societies are Rochdale, Leeds, Derby, Bingley, Oldham Equitable, Oldham Industrial, Halifax Industrial, and Littleborough.

CHAPTER XLIII

A SUGGESTIVE TABLE—CURIOUS FACTS AND FEATURES

THE table opposite, of 29 of the chief stores, shows that 21 do not understand that participation is a cardinal principle of Co-operation. The honourable exceptions are only eight.

Curious Facts and Features.—Very few sheet almanacs or balance sheets of stores give the date of commencement, while a private trader in 1905 will be careful to tell you that his business was "Established in 1904." Yet a store which has continuously grown for fifty years will leave the outside reader to suppose it is not five years old. Of course, the reader can infer, from the number of quarterly or half-yearly reports usually enumerated, the age of the society. But why leave it to inference?

Halifax, Lincoln, Bishop Auckland, and Huddersfield are the chief societies known to me who issue their balance sheets in coloured wrappers.

The movement is on the line of evolution, and societies which do little for education and nothing for employés, are likely in the near future to rectify these omissions.

The Aberdeen Society, which describes itself as a "Company of shareholders," makes a small award to Education, as Aberdeen is amply provided with day schools and night schools, but none in which co-operative education is given. Their favourite Lord Rector, Alexander Bain, would have told them differently had they asked him.

Mr. W. Hartley, the manager of the Bingley store, has written an intelligent Jubilee history of it, in which there are remarkable passages on co-operative principles and on the

Name of Society.	Age	Number of Members.	Annual Profits.	Education.	Number of Employes	Employés' Share of Profits.
	Years		£			
Aberdeen...	44	20,082	109,850	A small Grant	1,093	None
Barnsley British... ...	43	21,000	115,320	1 per cent. (£758)	665	None
Bingley	55	3,109	15,368	£130 Grant	95	None
Bishop Auckland ...	45	14,239	85,169	£14 4s. Grant	433	None
Blaydon-on-Tyne ...	46	8,213	48,059	3⅓ per cent. (£1,365)	240	None
Bolton	46	31,369	115,000	£3,000	316	£3,207 yearly average
Bradford	45	19,410	73,654	½ per cent. (£300)	592	None
Derby	55	18,676	50,875	£578	723	£1,063 yearly average
Edinburgh, St. Cuthbert's	46	32,227	288,666	£499 Grant	2,011	None
Gateshead-on-Tyne ...	44	12,347	66,422	None	440	None
Glasgow, St. George ...	35	16,108	63,000	2 per cent. (£1,267)	1,000	Same as Dividend, 10 per cent., £4,953
Halifax	54	10,691	46,481	£115 Grant	330	None
Hereford	19	990	6,270	£17 10s.	21	None
Huddersfield	45	13,108	57,700	1 per cent. (£570)	390	2½ per cent. in Drapery only
Leeds	58	49,340	226,000	¾ per cent. (£1,500)	1,932	None
Leicester	45	18,800	69,530	1¼ per cent. (£650)	350	£1,600 yearly average (1s. 3d. in the £)
Lincoln	44	10,677	19,391	£298 Grant	533	None
Littleborough	54	1,781	8,655	None	48	None
Manchester and Salford	46	16,521	46,561	£487 Grant	600	2½ per cent. net Profits
Newcastle-on-Tyne ...	44	19,031	78,664	One Shilling per cent.	700	None
Oldham (Industrial) ...	55	14,906	94,488	£2,000 Grant	525	None
Oldham (Equitable) ...	54	12,368	43,000	£1,260 Grant	284	None
Plymouth...	45	34,880	114,000	2½ per cent. (£2,460)	1,109	£3,200 yearly average
Rochdale (Equitable) ...	61	11,986	36,454	2½ per cent. (£769)	49	None
Stockton-on-Tees ...	40	10,901	36,700	½ per cent.	389	None
Stratford	45	15,109	41,068	1 per cent. (£400)	620	None
Sunderland	46	10,765	42,500	2½ per cent. (£818)	641	None
Wholesale (C.W.S.) ...	41	1,133 (Societies)	297,304	...	15,00 0	None
Woolwich	36	24,120	54,392	£1,032	949	£2,000

"Cruelty of the Credit System." Bingley resembles Rochdale in its early difficulties, and in having a Toad Lane in the town.

I saw the Blaydon-on-Tyne store begin and grow, being a frequent visitor to the village in the earlier years of the store. It owed much to the advice and friendship of Joseph Cowen, jun., subsequently M.P. for Newcastle. Mr. W. Crooks, the store secretary, in an interesting letter, regrets that the workmen give no award to Labour. He is the first secretary who has deplored it. To their honour the Education Committee have held many meetings to induce members not to forfeit their own claim to equitable treatment by refusing it to their fellows.

From what I knew of Blaydon workmen, I should conclude they were the most likely of any workmen in England, from their good sense and good nature, to accord to those in their service, that share of profits at their disposal, which they all desired to receive at the hands of those who employed them. Had they set the example, it would have been followed by employers in whose service they were, and the income of thousands of workmen in their neighbourhood would have been increased for a generation past. If each member had been personally instructed in the equity of co-operation on joining the store, the state of things which true-minded members of their committee have in vain endeavoured to correct, would never have come to pass.

Newcastle-on-Tyne is the most notable Dark store. Until 1905, it gave nothing to Education. Now it has a rule under which it gives one shilling per cent., which on £78,000 realises but the miserly amount of £39. This society quotes, as testimony to its merits, words by Earl Morley, who distinctly praises it, "that the proceeds of industry are increased" by it, whereas the society does not "increase the proceeds of industry" by one penny. The directors quote also the "Encyclopædia Britannica," which asserts that the "wealth [of the society] is distributed on the principles of equity." But there is no equity where nothing is given to the workers who assist in furthering its welfare. The Newcastle Society further prints as one of their claims to public confidence and respect that it is engaged in "conciliating the

conflicting interests of the capitalist, the worker, and the purchaser." Yet during forty-four years it has not accorded sixpence to the worker, but has given everything to the consumer. Certainly the society is not impetuous in acting upon its principles of "equity."

No light so curious, ample, and instructive is thrown upon working-class character as is furnished by the study of "co-operators." The workmen of Newcastle-on-Tyne, in respect of intelligence and public spirit, are equal to any class in the United Kingdom. Yet where they have control of the money of their own order, they keep it in their own hands as capitalists do, and exclude their fellow-workmen from participation in the wealth jointly created. The democratic door of Co-operation is left open, and no check-taker is stationed there to see that those who enter have co-operative tickets. The public go in without any ticket at all. They are not co-operators who enter, but mere dividend-seekers, who cast votes for themselves alone, regardless of the honour of Co-operation, whose motto is, "Each for All."

Stratford has a great store, which began in 1860. For years it stood aloof from the Union of Societies, but being democratic in its constitution, more genial members came upon its committee, and the society grew with more rapidity than any other within the metropolitan area. It entertained the Congress in 1904. Its shops extend down two streets. To pass from window to window is like walking through a great market and emporium where all the products of Nature and manufacture are to be seen. The business of this great society commenced in 1860 in a barber's shop, and did business only on Friday and Saturday evenings.

Sunderland gives us a very able Chairman of the Central Education Committee—Mr. W. R. Rae—yet though the society has 16,000 members, who receive £42,500 of dividend yearly, they give nothing to 641 employés who help to make it.[1] Is there no connection between education and equity? The society has a Harvest Festival, at which, in 1904, the Rev. Francis Wood conducted the service, who spoke of the time when "human selfishness had not fenced off the

[1] The reference is to figures in the Table, as in other instances in this chapter.

land on every side, saying, 'This is mine and mine alone.'" Yet this is what the Sunderland Society has done during forty-six years. It has "fenced off" its dividends for the purchaser only, contemptuously or inconsiderately excluding the workers from any participation.

The business report bearing the words "Co-operative Society, St. George's," does not say in what city the store is situated, which assumes, on the part of the secretary, that no one outside Glasgow would care to know where the store is, which deserves to be known, as co-operators elsewhere would regard it with honour, seeing that it gives two per cent. to Education—£1,267—and accords to its employés £4,953, at the rate of 10 per cent., which exceeds Plymouth, the next society distinguished for its handsome award to Labour.

The balance sheet of the St. Cuthbert's Society, Edinburgh, is the most analytical I have collected, but the society has no other merit. With £109,850 annual profit, it gives nothing to employés, of whom it has nearly 1,100. The Littleborough Society's balance sheet excels in details, since it gives the financial position of its nearly 2,000 members.

The secretaries of chief societies ought to be enumerated in addition to those mentioned, since they display great administrative capacity, and have been my authorities for local and financial facts which they have enabled me to give.

Of the persons named elsewhere as members of the first Central Board at the London Congress of 1869—William Pare, Thomas Hughes, Edward Vansittart Neale, Anthony J. Mundella, Lloyd Jones, Joseph Woodin, William Allen, James Hole, Dr. Travis, Thomas Cheetham (Rochdale), Isaiah Lee (Oldham), James Borrowman (Glasgow), have since died.

CHAPTER XLIV

TWENTY-SEVEN CONGRESSES

On page 566 are the names of the Presidents of Congress from 1869 to 1878. The following is a list of the Presidents from 1878 to 1905 :—

1879. Professor J. Stewart, Gloucester.
1880. Bishop of Durham, Newcastle-on-Tyne.
1881. Earl of Derby, Leeds.
1882. Right Hon. Lord Reay, Oxford.
1883. Right Hon. W. E. Baxter, M.P., Edinburgh.
1884. Right Hon. Earl of Shaftesbury, Derby.
1885. Mr. Lloyd Jones, Oldham.
1886. Right Hon. Earl of Morley, Plymouth.
1887. Mr. George Jacob Holyoake, Carlisle.
1888. Mr. Edward Vansittart Neale, Dewsbury.
1889. Professor A. Marshall, Ipswich.
1890. Earl of Rosebery, Glasgow.
1891. Mr. A. H. D. Acland, M.P., Lincoln.
1892. Mr. J. T. W. Mitchell, Rochdale.
1893. Mr. Joseph Clay, J.P., Bristol.
1894. Mr. Thomas Tweddell, J.P., F.R.G.S., Sunderland.
1895. Mr. Geo. Thomson, Huddersfield.
1896. Earl of Winchilsea, Woolwich.
1897. Mr. Wm. Maxwell, J.P., Perth.
1898. Dr. Creighton, Bishop of London, Peterborough.
1899. Mr. F. Hardern, J.P., Liverpool.
1900. Mr. W. H. Brown. Cardiff.
1901. Mr. J. Warwick, Middlesbrough.
1902. Mr. G. Hawkins, Exeter.
1903. Mr. J. Shillito, Doncaster.
1904. Mr. Edward Owen Greening, Stratford.
1905. Dr. Hans Müller, Paisley.

The first Congress report was edited by J. M. Ludlow, the second by Henry Pitman, the third, fourth, and fifth by the present writer. Those from 1874 to 1879 were edited by E. V. Neale. They were edited not in the sense of merely compiling and indexing the matter, but edited in the sense of interpreting the quality and nature of the proceedings, which

made the Congress report very valuable, both to members and the public. This form of editing was discontinued because a member of the Board objected to opinions sometimes expressed. Yet the opinion of so competent a commentator must always be of value, though some readers might dissent from it.

Each Congress report has its intrinsic interest. Of late years the quarto form has ceased, and the report now appears in a convenient volume, with many attractive illustrations. The reports extend from 1869 to 1905.

Reference has been made to an early series of Congresses of which ample reports, for those days, were published. But the reports began with the second Congress, held in 1830; but no record was known to exist of the first Congress. It has recently been brought to light that the first Congress was held in Manchester, May 26, 1827. The report was drawn up by William Pare. The principal members present were Robert Owen, Elijah Dixon, of Manchester (in the chair), Rev. Joseph Marriot, William Pare (Birmingham), J. Finch, and William Thompson, of Cork. These were all distinguished names in the early co-operative movement. The report was made on four large foolscap pages, closely printed, apparently for personal circulation. This is the report which has been so often inquired for, which no one has hitherto traced. There were known to be three Congresses. But which was the first Congress? In what town was it held? In what building was it held? Who attended it? What was the business done? No answer could be given to these questions, until I discovered the document amid the more than 2,000 letters in possession of the Owen Committee of Manchester, for many years in the possession of Mr. Pare, and were ultimately presented by his son-in-law, William Dixon Galpin, to myself.

The End of Queenwood Hall.—The letters "C. M." which appeared on the exterior of the hall were taken to indicate the Commencement of the Millennium. Certainly had Mr. Owen and his friends succeeded in building the new world, it had been well done. No cathedral was ever built so reverently as was Queenwood Hall. Hand-made nails, not machine-made, were used in the work out of sight. There

was nothing mean anywhere open or concealed. The great kitchen was wainscoted with mahogany half-way up the walls.

Queenwood Hall of so many noble associations, social and educational, was destroyed by fire in 1902; Mr. Charles Willmore, who had been its principal for many years, perished in it. Being fifty, he had for some time ceased active duty.

When Italy initials the magnificent Emporium Store it has erected in Milan, it will not need C. M. but C. C. C. (Commencement of Co-operative Commerce). In 1886 Signor Luigi Buffoli founded the Unione Co-operativa in Milan among railway men, which has since overrun all the regions round about. Buffoli adopted the English principle of Participation with Labour and Trade. It employs over three hundred workpeople, and accords them 10 per cent. for their Provident Fund. The Library and Education Department are well supported. Members and non-members receive the same amount of dividend [1]—a logical consistency, nowhere in force in England. It is the Prince of Stores. "It has a frontage of 300 feet, and 150 feet in depth. A vast corridor runs through the whole building. At one point there are three marble arches. Over these arches—gold mounted—are the names of Owen, Holyoake, and Neale." [2] Signor Buffoli has been the President since 1886—a man of real principle as well as of suburb initiative. "Storia," the beautifully illustrated history of the Unione Co-operativa of Milan has a passage deserving of a place in this "History." "Thanks," it says gratefully, "to the humble but energetic co-operator, Giovanni Rota, the first Co-operative Store was established outside Genoa, on the Rochdale System." At the time of the Rochdale Jubilee, Onorota Cassella suggested a halfpenny subscription with which to have struck a splendid gold medal, now one of the treasures of the Rochdale Society. It was a token of the friendship of the Milanese co-operators for those of Rochdale.

[1] *Co-operative News*, November 4, 1905.
[2] Mr. Elsey's letter to Mr. J. C. Gray, October, 1905.

CHAPTER XLV

THE "CO-OPERATIVE NEWS"

THE *Co-operative News* commenced in 1871, and in 1872 it had attained a circulation of 15,000. Its original capital was £479, subscribed by forty-five societies and a few individuals. At a later stage the Newspaper Society was in debt £1,000. By the end of 1904 its weekly circulation had reached 71,000. It made a profit the first three months of £256. Capital is now £15,000, held by 324 societies, who represent a membership of 1,087,000, but who collectively take only 71,000 copies. Its Reserve Fund is £1,176. In addition, the land, buildings, and machinery, which cost £32,459, are now written down at £13,931.

A journal representing the co-operative movement, the official organ of all the societies, is a public convenience. One supreme referee for authority, counsel, information, and the free expression of the opinion of all members of the party, is a propagandist force. The *Co-operative News* is now in its thirty-sixth volume, and is a well printed, illustrated class journal. Being the organ of a selling movement, with more than a million customers, it ought to be included in the weekly purchases of every member. As 30,000 new members join the society annually, taking a copy of the paper might be made a condition with them. Any one joining a company which paid 10 per cent. on its shares would have to pay a premium. The average gain to a store member is 10 per cent. on his purchases. No premium is asked from him, and taking a penny paper (supplied at the stores)—worth more than a penny as papers go—would be readily assented to,

and the circulation of the *News* would amount to 100,000 in three months.

It requires great knowledge of widely-scattered and diversified local interests to edit such a journal. Mr. W. M. Bamford, as successfully as his father did before him, discharges the duties of Editor.

When the *Co-operative News* first began, a notice was published stating that post-office orders were to be made payable to the secretary, Mr. William Nuttall, Alexandra Park, Oldham.

A journal entitled the *Co-operator*, long conducted by Mr. Henry Pitman, which preceded the *Co-operative News*, gave reports, in Vol. I. (1860) of co-operative groups from sixteen places. In Vol. X. (1870) it gave reports of societies and meetings in 138 places, showing substantial increase in co-operative activity. There were doubtless other societies and meetings of which news never reached the *Co-operator*. Some reports appeared in it from South Australia. A society is mentioned in Adelaide having twenty-eight members. In Cincinnatti, U.S.A., Co-operation is a subject of notice; from which the reader will learn the growing prevalence of societies in the constructive period.

The literature of co-operation will one day have considerable representation in the Press. The *News* management has lately added to its expository and popular publications the *Millgate Monthly*, an illustrated magazine which promises to find scope for that latent literary ability which must pervade so large a movement. Its appearance has proved a conspicuous success. No doubt practised and congenial pens will be found to contribute to its pages, both at home and abroad.

CHAPTER XLVI

THE CO-OPERATIVE UNION

This Union is a Representative Executive of the societies, having departments of Administration, Defence, and Instruction. It issued a Manual of Auditing and a Manual of Book-keeping. "Co-operative Book-keeping" is by Alfred Wood, A.C.A. It has an introduction by W. R. Rae, Chairman of the Central Education Committee, who is himself a public teacher of repute. Mr. Wood, who has genius for explaining things financial, begins with a clear definition of book-keeping, so that the reader understands from the very first the nature, scope, and uses of the financial art he is studying. Co-operative Book-keeping is of a special nature which Mr. Wood entirely understands.

A companion volume, entitled "A Manual of Auditing," has been compiled by Thomas Wood, R.J. Milburne, and H. R. Bailey; twice revised by the compilers in 1887 and 1899. Auditors are as physicians called in to see whether a financial patient is in good health, or in a critical condition. Ordinary unaudited book-keeping may present the familiar appearance of robust life. All the while there may be seeds of consumption or symptoms of fatal disease in the patient, unknown or unnoticed by those most concerned. A real intelligent audit reveals the secret malady if there be one, or certifies to the sound health of the society. A good auditor has in his mind the policy a society ought to pursue, to keep in financial health. I have been present when useful remarks offered by the auditor were frowned down, as being no part of his business to have an opinion outside his figures.

Societies will never have the full advantages of auditing until an auditor can give his free judgment of its financial affairs. An auditor is responsible to the public as well as to the society whose affairs he investigates. It is not enough when an auditor says, "I certify to the truth of the accounts put before me." Has he seen all the accounts? and does he know what to ask for? All the value of his audit lies there.

Book-keeping is a moral art which every man in business, however small, ought to master. The Bankruptcy Court is crowded by persons who have found their way there—not by dishonesty, but by ignorance of their own affairs.

The seat of the Union is a handsome structure erected some years ago, known as Union Buildings, Long Millgate, Manchester.

By the natural advantages of their position, having control of the funds of the movement, the Buying Society is able to control all the others. It has three times evinced its power in being able to resist the authority of Congress, which passed resolutions requesting it to put its workshops in a line with acknowledged co-operative principle. It has also been a wonder to foreign co-operators by what process of administration one society has come to control the other thousand, as it manifestly does. In the archives of the Musée Social is the first explanation given of this singular circumstance, for which the present writer received their large silver medal. The only English elucidation of the facts are to be found in an article in the *Fortnightly Review*, entitled "Higher Co-operation—Its Inner History," January 1902.

The Honour of Societies.—The United Board is responsible for the morality or consistency of the societies, so far as it may be in their power to cause information to be given to the members of such duty as the profession of co-operative principles implies. The belief that co-operative societies neither give nor accept credit has been a passport to the good opinion of the public. No committee would have destroyed this prestige, had they, on appointment, been required to declare their intention to prevent indebtedness among their members. Committees who allow it consider that giving credit is a mere convenience of trade, and do not know it is much more than that.

Not only is no inquiry made as to the co-operative knowledge of new members—no question is put as to the co-operative information possessed by members who are invested with the distinction and authority of committeemen, who are entrusted not only with the administration but the character of the society. The committees are the magistrates of the stores. Had they co-operative knowledge and conviction, participation —which is the strength and charm of Co-operation—would not be confined to those who are consumers and refused to those who are workers. Credit would not creep into the store, nor would co-operative education—upon which so much depends—be left to chance and charity, as is done in so many stores. No Congress paper is read upon the duties and qualifications of committeemen which, when officially sanctioned, could be put into the hands of store magistrates.

I take one instance, that of debt which has attained great dimensions, and committees have been accessories to it. Their guilt must be owing to lack of knowledge of their responsibilities, or from unfitness to have charge of the interests entrusted to them.

With the poorer classes the habit of indebtedness is ruin, loss of character, and of household control. The store permitting credit sinks to the level of the private trader, to whom we claim to be superior.

Credit is a crime in the eyes of Co-operation, and County Courts in every town protest against indebtedness. The store committee is, in a measure, responsible for the morals of members. To deliver the poor from the slavery of indebtedness was the earliest improvement Co-operation professed to bring about. A man in debt is owned by somebody else from whom he obtains food or clothing on credit. Stores profess neither to give credit nor accept it. The store that does is false to Co-operation. Such is not the worst. Honest-minded new members join the store to get free and keep free of debt. But they find the store keeps debt-books like other shopkeepers, then the new members fall back into the degradation of credit, and are demoralised by us. Mr. J. C. Gray, as a general secretary should, has with decision and foresight called attention to this subject. The Birmingham Society, into which the canker-worm of debt was eating its way, has taken the wise resolu-

tion of stamping it out. With wisdom which other societies might imitate, this society has reminded its members that it is within their power to draw upon their profits in the hands of the store for as much as will cover one week's purchases, by which they would free themselves from the necessity of any further debt.

Wisely did Dr. Johnson say, "All to whom want is terrible, upon whatever principle, ought to attain the salutary art of contracting expenses—for without economy none can be rich, and with it few can be poor."

The Soul of the Store.—From the first it was a point of great importance that the store should have a library of such books as its members should wish or require to read. All libraries were then under the control of the squire or the parson, who excluded all books they did not wish to be read. A store library was, therefore, a sign of intellectual independence. Of late years a society here and there has given or proposed to give its books to some public library. This might be a gain to the receivers, but a loss to the givers, and progressive books among them would soon cease to appear, and never be replaced. Then those who wish to read them must be supplicants, where they could formerly command. It seems, therefore, the duty of official leaders of societies to discourage the relinquishment or sale of libraries in the interest of members themselves.

"To add a library to a house is to give that house a soul." A good relevant library is not less the soul of a store, which without knowledge, is dead. It may be some expense to keep a library, and he who will not pay the rent of the place in which his soul may lodge, probably has a soul not worth lodging. If he has he will soon find himself out of doors, exposed to all the storms of ignorance. "Zeal" itself, "without relevant knowledge, is as fire without light." A library is a bank of thought, where members may draw ideas out who never had any to put in.

Co-operative Education.—The Union is the guardian and promoter of the education of the members of the movement. All wise stores authorise in their laws the provision of an education fund. Many excellent ideas never travel because there are no means to pay their fare. From the beginning it has always been the rule that capital and intelligence are two

trade charges, the inevitable conditions of its business progress. Every year the Union publishes an Educational Programme, increasing in comprehensivness and importance. No other industrial movement ever had anything equal to it. Sugden said of Brougham, when he first became Lord Chancellor, that "if he knew a little of law he would know a little of everything." So it might be said that if this programme included co-operative education, nothing would be wanting.

Education is not co-operative because it is given by co-operators. The compilers of the programme do not appear conscious that there is a distinctive *co-operative* education, quite apart from that given by School Boards or University Extension classes. The early co-operative propaganda was engaged in giving the education of *Companionship*, which is unknown now. The art of association, which has no collected literature and no professors, is the very soul of the co-operative movement. Without the spirit of unity and active goodwill to others, Co-operation sinks into mere commercialism. Why should the friendly spirit exist? Co-operators should promote the good of others—but why should they do it? What are the motives for it, which are common to all persons irrespective of creeds, and which never fail when creeds vary or fade? What demeanour should officials maintain so as not to alienate members? Mere intellectual education is no surety for probity. The artistic accomplishments of Oscar Wilde did not make him a desirable companion. Energy, alertness, and business sagacity are often found in a rascal. Knowledge where the red sandstone strata lie, or when the next comet will appear, affords no clue to the conditions of probity, nor inspires any preference for ethical qualities.

CHAPTER XLVII

WHAT ARE CONGRESS QUESTIONS?

Congresses have been thrown into confusion through the Chairman, or Standing Orders Committee, or the chief officials of the society, not being prepared to state what propositions brought forward were or were not out of order.

The question arises—What are the principles of Co-operation, and what are its obligation and policy? Co-operation professes primarily to enable working people, by means of self-help, in voluntary concert with others, to acquire business knowledge and improve their material condition.

Amid the various societies extant for promoting religious or political objects, Co-operation proposes to establish an organisation of workers who—asking nothing from the State save equality of opportunity—shall, by themselves and of themselves, by labour and commerce, better the fortunes of industry, always observing the rule of equity—ever seeking their own interests by means compatible with the interests of others.

Even this brief statement of co-operative principle and policy would enable any one to decide that any project or system which trusted to the State to accomplish it, could not officially be brought forward for Congress discussion. Such a proposal is socialistic, and Co-operators are not Socialists. Before the Congress could acquiesce in Socialist methods, the Congress would cease to be co-operative, since it would abandon its principle of self-help, and Co-operation could no longer appeal to the poorer class anywhere to improve their circumstances by self-effort, to which all the fortunes and successes of Co-operation are owing. Socialism dissolves Co-operation. Had the early co-operators looked to the State for aid, there would not

be to-day a single store doing business, and the millions or property possessed by co-operators would have no existence. Socialists have no more right to enter our Congress, and seek to pervert it to their own purposes, than co-operators would have to go into a Socialist or Collectivist assembly and propose to them to abandon their principles and methods and adopt ours. No person proposing the introduction of Socialist principles, or conniving at their introduction into our movement, can be a co-operator. If he professes to be one, he is betraying the cause he has undertaken to espouse. Socialism may be better than Co-operation, but it is not the same, and those who think it better should go over to it, and not pretend to be on the side of Co-operation when they are deserting it. Officers or Congress, finding compromising questions brought before them—questions not only distinct from Co-operation, but destructive of it—can have no hesitation in declaring them out of order.

The co-operative party being a distinctive body—neutral, but not antagonistic to any other, religious or political, but separate from them—it has to pursue its chosen course or social effort. It imposes no theological tenets on its members, nor exacts adhesion to any political platform. To take sides with any one creed would involve conflict with every other, for conscience is the most fiery, invincible, and belligerent of all human attributes. It is that instinct which fights for truth and personal sincerity, and—happily for progress—can never be bound by majorities. To take one side in politics would be a challenge to the other. To pledge the societies to one party would be as imprudent as to impose upon them one creed. It would embark Co-operation on a shoreless sea, without compass or chart, where rocks are known to abound. Motions which would cast the movement adrift from its moorings are surely out of order.

It is a great thing that a distinctive body of industrial co-operators—having recognition, influence, and wealth—should have grown up within the memory of living men. No wonder that another party, having no principle of self-effort and little to show in the way of success, should be desirous that the co-operative movement should take up theirs and run it for them. If we are do to this by one body, we should

have to do it by many more, and in a few years we should have all the chief movements in the world on our hands, and we should soon be like the poor gentleman in one of Ben Jonson's plays, who had "such tides of business that he had no time to be himself." The co-operative movement is not itself yet, and it will be time enough to become the handmaid of other movements when it has perfected its own.

In a democratic movement like Co-operation, every new member has an equal voice in its fortunes with those who have grown grey in its service and have acquired the wisdom of arduous experience. The new-comers may, as they often have done, arrest education, connive at indebtedness among the members, and imperil the honour and progress of the movement in many ways. Is no precaution to be taken against this? The doors of the movement are wide open and unguarded. Every one may enter who merely wants a dividend—knowing little and caring less for the higher ethical principles which have brought the movement its best friends and given it influence beyond any other industrial organisation. It is officially known that 30,000 new adherents every year pass through the portals of the movement, which is only like an arithmetical turnstile, counting the numbers, but having no check upon the quality of the throng. Thus the movement is dominated by recruits with competition in their bones, who give a competitive complexion to Co-operation.

The question of the status of the Co-operative Bank was one of great interest to Mr. Hughes, Mr. Ludlow, and Mr. Neale, who wrote pamphlets upon it. They wished its administration to be guided by what are known as "banking principles." What does a great body of new stores, which have arisen since those days, know of banking principles? Here is a topic of momentous interest for discussion.

What are the limits of commercialism?—

> "Which, like Omnipotence,
> Mantles the movement with darkness
> Until right and wrong seem accidents,"

and men despair lest truth and equity be obscured by it. Here is another topic for a Congress paper, the discussion of which would elevate all who took part in it.

Lord Salisbury once asked, "Where does Municipalism end, and where does the State begin?" It is no less an important question in a social movement.

Co-operation has two principles, individualism and association. What are their limits? How far can we carry them? These and twenty other questions are undebated, unsettled, and knowledge of them are not yet attributes of the movement. It will be time enough to invite our members to enter upon other fields of enterprise when they are masters of their own.

CHAPTER XLVIII

PARLIAMENTARY REPRESENTATION

DIRECT representation of Co-operation in Parliament is a question of natural interest to co-operators. Co-operation has had great representatives in the House of Commons—as Mr. John Stuart Mill, Mr. Walter Morrison, and Thomas Hughes. The two last members lost their seats through their known friendliness to Co-operation. A former Lord Derby, Mr. Bright, and Mr. Cobden, were steadfast in their friendship to it. Mr. Thomas Burt and Mr. F. Maddison have been foremost among trade unionists in espousing the cause.

As there is no interrogation of our new members as to what they know of Co-operation—as in the old days of the movement—a candidate may offer himself who may, when elected, represent something else than what co-operators expected. A Socialist candidate, of whom several have found their way to the platforms of the societies, would be likely to do this. A parliamentary representative should have political opinions of some kind, or the interest of the State would fare very badly in his hands. A candidate cannot be taken at random, and no questions asked. What is he to represent? Is it the commercial interests of the movement mainly, or its ethical principles? Co-operation stands for commercialism and morality. A member of Parliament should be a patriot, who cares for the interest of the State first and the pecuniary interests of his party second. If he has no political principles he has no business to be in Parliament at all. There are

already too many there who have no public principle whatever. Shelley has described one of them—

> "He is no Whig—he is no Tory.
> No Deist and no Christian he.
> He is so subtle that to be nothing
> Is all his glory."

Is the co-operative candidate to be one of these impartial knaves whom Cobden knew so well, who had no bias, not even towards the truth? Co-operators could not be expected to vote for such a candidate. Suppose he is a Tory. If so, he has as much right to be a candidate as a Liberal; but how can those co-operators who are Liberal vote for one who does not hold their principles, but will disparage and vote against them? For Liberal co-operators to vote for a Tory candidate because it would serve their trade interests, would be to desert their Liberal principles for their personal advantage. It would be that kind of baseness of which there is too much seen at every election.

Suppose our co-operative candidate to be a Liberal, the Tory members could not conscientiously vote for him without being guilty of that treachery to their convictions which it does not become co-operators to advise or encourage. There can be no direct representation except by a Liberal candidate where the Liberal co-operators in the constituency are sufficiently numerous to elect him—or where a Tory candidate being put forward, the Tory co-operators in the borough or district are in strength enough to elect him. These, alone, are the circumstances under which we can have direct representation. There is a dubious political party among working men who invite working men to vote for a candidate whether Liberal or Tory, if he will vote for their interest. But co-operators have not sunk to that level of indifference to principle, or treachery to the State.

Some co-operators are under the false impression, that because politics cannot be made a Congress question, that, therefore, co-operators should be indifferent to politics.

In the days when the Rochdale store began, two public questions were occupying the nation, the Repeal of the Corn Laws and Free Trade. Many leading co-operators were persuaded—as the Socialists are now—that their great scheme

would render any other reform unnecessary. They said the repeal of competition was more important than the repeal of the Corn Laws. Like the Chartists, who said that the Free Trade agitation was delaying the Charter, the co-operators thought the Charter delayed communism. Mr. G. A. Fleming, the editor of the *New Moral World*, took this course. Mr. Lloyd Jones moved resolutions on the same side. This caused among the public a distrust of Co-operation as a sinister movement, the members of which were personally against Fiscal and Political reform, or were conniving with opponents of them. A co-operator is for neutrality within the society, as regards religion and politics, but individually he should never cease to take sides in ecclesiastical and political affairs.

Politics, like piety, is a personal question, and every one should take a personal interest in it. That man makes a great mistake who thinks that because he is a social reformer in the co-operative body he should cease to be a political reformer as an individual. As an individual he ought to belong to that Church whose creed commends itself to his conscience, and be a member of that political party whose principles, in his judgment, are most conducive to the honour and welfare of the State. Because a man is a co-operator he does not cease to be a citizen or to be concerned in the freedom or prosperity of that great commonwealth, which is sometimes given the name of Empire. To abandon great national interests to the unchecked control of intriguers or adventurers, and render no aid to the advocates of the people, is a dangerous and criminal disregard of public duty. Tory and Liberal are more than mere party names. Tory represents the authority of the rich, and the subjection of the people. Liberal stands for reason and liberty.

CHAPTER XLIX

OTHER INSTITUTIONS AND INCIDENTS

Industrial Exhibitions.—Prince Albert may be regarded as the originator in Europe of Industrial Exhibitions as a public feature. The first experimental one was held in the Shakespeare Room, Birmingham, in 1839. I had charge of the assistant exhibitors. It was held at the Prince's instigation. It was thirty years later (1869) when the first Co-operative Exhibition was made at the first revived Congress in London. The Exhibition was small then, but by 1880 it became an indispensable feature of Congress. Where no room sufficiently large could be had in the Congress town, temporary halls have been erected for the purpose. Of late years the product of the Wholesale Society's workshops and those of the co-partnership manufactories have been exhibited in the same building—crowds attend, and the townspeople derive pleasure from it. The object of the promoters of the Exhibitions is to bring before the public, examples of co-operative handicraft which may be trusted to be of fair value. Lately articles of higher workmanship are included to suit the taste of more opulent purchasers. The Exhibitions are intended to raise the standard of skill among workers. Some Communist societies in America obtain on the market 30 per cent. more for their produce than other sellers. Even the tremulous name of Shakers does not deter purchasers, because their goods are known to be honest. Mr. E. O. Greening effected a brilliant extension of the Exhibition idea, by constituting annual Festivals of Labour, Flowers, and Song at the Crystal Palace. A mile of tables have been covered with flowers and fruit—a sight the world

has not seen elsewhere in the same splendour and extent. Mr. Henry Vivian now continues them.

At Hart Street, Bloomsbury, London, is the tailoring department of the Social Institute, originated by Mr. Greening in the former concert-room of the Princess's Theatre, Oxford Street, where I asked Mr. Greening to arrange a meeting, at which I introduced Mrs. Annie Besant, who addressed her first audience there. It was but following the example of Mr. Owen, who gave Edward Irving the hospitality of Gray's Inn Road Hall, to preach in, when his religious friends were hostile to him.

An International Profit-sharing Congress.—An International Congress Alliance has been established. It originated in a proposal made by M. de Boyve, at the Plymouth Congress of 1886. At the Rochdale Congress of 1892, Messrs. E. de Boyve, Charles Robert, E. V. Neale, E. O. Greening, T. Hughes, G. J. Holyoake, J. Greenwood, and other friends of profit-sharing, founded the Alliance. At the first Congress of the body held in London, the integrity of the Congress was changed by the admission to it of parties having alien objects, which converted the Congress into a commercial union—a good object in its way, but not participation. The Congress no longer—like the Musée Social of France—stood for participation. Mr. Henry W. Wolff is the present chairman of the new Trading Alliance, who has had repeated travels through Europe, which have enabled him more than any one else to promote the commercial aims of the Alliance. At the formation of the original Congress it was an object of Charles Robert and M. de Boyve to prevent the Association being perverted by the Socialists to their objects. The only expedient for preventing this was expelling from membership such persons, who were to have the right to appeal when the cumbersome proceedings of a trial took place. My proposal was, that each member, on admission, should sign a brief declaration of honour that, while he remained a member, he would neither promote, nor connive at, the perversion of the society from its cardinal objects, as such action would be held to terminate the membership of the individual. The honour of the member would be an effectual safeguard of the integrity of the Congress of Participation. Had this form of precau-

tion been adopted, the submergement of profit-sharing by the London Congress would not have taken place.

The last day of Congress saw an influx of voters from the North of England, with whom profit-sharing was not a principle. They superseded the organisation they found, and set up a new Alliance of All-sorts, in which profit-sharing was reduced to a feature, and commercialism established in its place, so that the international representation of profit-sharing ceased. A commercial alliance in the interest of societies had advantages, but those who wished to bring it about should have called a Congress for that purpose, and left the original Congress intact. Had my suggestion to Charles Robert been adopted, this *coup d'état* of commercialism would not have occurred. Ten years later (1905) the same thing was attempted at Paisley. Had it succeeded it would have destroyed the Co-operative Union. The ethics of honour between individuals is pretty well understood, but between societies—not so.

An International Commercial Alliance. — This alliance, which commenced in the manner described, was a commercial necessity in the nature of things and will no doubt usefully extend Distributive Co-operation in other countries. It has already held several Congresses consecutively, London, 1895 (if that is to be counted one of its Congresses); Paris, 1896; Delft, 1897; Paris, 1900 (a second time); Manchester, 1902; and Buda-Pesth, 1904. This new alliance will have to hold Congresses in America, Canada, and Australia. One of its objects is the "study of the true principles and best methods of profit-sharing and the association of labour with capital, including the remuneration of workmen." Another object is "to hasten a system of profit-sharing" [improbable]. These objects authorise the introduction and advocacy of Co-partnership at the Congresses of the Commercial Alliance. One day the original profit-sharing Congresses will be revived, as the participation of labour in profit, like "John Brown's soul, is marching on" in every nation.

A Permanent Building Society.—A general Building Society is a feature of recent years. It was established in London in 1884. Its prosperity and usefulness have grown during twenty-one years. Its roll of membership includes names of well-

known co-operative and trades unionist leaders. The society is registered under the Building Societies' Act, and not under the Industrial Provident Societies' Acts. It has a growing record of efficiency. Its secretary is Mr. Arthur Webb, and its offices are at 22, Red Lion Square, London, W.C. At first it seemed doubtful whether such a society could be established. When Mr. A. Webb became its secretary in 1895 its receipts amounted to £7,000 per annum. In 1905 they had reached £88,000. Its assets are now £230,000. The Society has 165 agents, mainly in co-operative societies. It deals in mortgages only of moderate amounts for better security. It holds 990 mortgages, distributed over thirty counties. The average amount of each mortgage is only £233, which shows that its progress is safeguarded by prudence. It has properties in Yorkshire, Cheshire, Warwick, Northumberland, Dorset, Durham, and Glamorgan. It has 183 mortgages in Essex, 176 in Middlesex, 158 in Surrey, 132 in Kent, 118 in Hampshire, and 50 in Cambridge.

The Insurance Society.—Equally, or more, entitled to notice is the Co-operative Insurance Society, whose offices are now Union Buildings, Long Millgate, Manchester, and whose secretary is Mr. James Odgers. The origin of the society dates from 1867, and its first registered office was at the Equitable Pioneers Stores, Toad Lane, Rochdale. It insures against fire, guarantees the honesty of employés in co-operative societies, insures the lives of members of co-operative societies, and also against death by accidents. The first fire policy was issued February, 1868. Its first fidelity guarantee was given in June, 1869. Its first life policy was issued in August, 1886. Its offices were removed from Rochdale to Manchester in 1871. No life policies are issued—which is a feature of other companies—entitling the holder to profits, which enable many persons to save who otherwise would not. Such policy-holders subscribe the profit in the higher rate they pay—but they save the money. Though in accordance with co-operative practice to afford this facility, it has never been done in this office.

The total premium income of this society for the first year (1869) and a half was £275. In 1904, £46,007. Funds in excess of paid-up capital in September, 1869, were £188. At the end of 1904, £141,210.

Incidents.—The fourth object of the Rochdale Pioneers—1844, was "the purchasing or renting an estate or estates of land, to be cultivated by the members who may be out of employment or whose labour may be badly remunerated." This was the object of the "Unemployed Bill," 1905. It took sixty years for the idea to travel from Rochdale to Westminster.

If the reader would understand the virgin enthusiasm of co-operators, which has oft recurred, and in some later generations will recur again, as new dreamers of a better state of society arise, let him read the following lines sung by the Owen party on board ship *en route* to New Harmony, Indiana, 1825:

> "Land of the West, we come to thee
> Far o'er the desert of the sea;
> Under the white-winged canopy,
> Land of the West, we fly to thee;
> Sick of the Old World's sophistry,
> Haste then across the dark, blue sea,
> Land of the West, we rush to thee!
> Home of the brave, soil of the free,—
> Huzza! she rises o'er the sea."

They did not find the land of the free out in the West, but they helped to make every land more free in social respects.

CHAPTER L

CO-PARTNERSHIP WITH LABOUR

"My idea is that the real characteristic of Co-operative Production might be stated in this way—that it was an endeavour to substitute an Industrial Republic for an Industrial Monarchy."—MR. GERALD BALFOUR, M.P., Crystal Palace, *August*, 1899.

The Agricultural and Horticultural Association.—Mr. Gerald Balfour's penetrating conception of Co-operative production covers the whole ground of Industrial Co-partnership.

The society which was earliest to adopt Participation principles was the Agricultural and Horticultural Association. This association, elsewhere mentioned, carried Co-operation into a field unoccupied by it before. In 1877 the business reached about £80,000, and its profits about £3,000 per year. The rules at that time limited the dividend on shares to 7½ per cent. In practice, with a few exceptions it paid only 5 per cent. Half the profits were paid to customers and 10 per cent. of the net profits went to the employés. The clerks had dividend on a separate footing. The total dividends paid to employés came to about 20 per cent. The sums paid to customers repaid them several times over all the capital they had contributed to establish the Association. In 1880 the business had obtained a turnover of over £100,000 of sales per year. Then came the great agricultural depression which largely affected the Association. Previously it had relied on its farming public. Then it commenced to develop the Horticultural side of its business, which restored its prosperity and profitableness. During the three years since 1901 the Association has made sales of £162,000, and net profits of £9,426. By consent of members the profits have been retained with the object of strengthening

the Association in case of recurring depression. New regulations as to the division of profits, give to the employés 25 per cent. of all the net profits. Customers still receive about 50 per cent., and the remainder goes to reserves or objects of public usefulness. The capital now amounts to £50,000, and when in full work it employs 250 people. The Association has over 3,000 members. Its headquarters are at 92, Long Acre, London, W.C., in the historic building once known as St. Martin's Hall, in which Prof. Maurice launched the Working Men's College and Charles Dickens gave his first reading. It is now the "One & All" seed warehouses and offices. Its works are still at Deptford. Mr. E. O. Greening, in his "Country in Town" (1905), says, "The Association is a mutual profit-sharing co-partnership, partly commercial, as far as it seeks to further the best interests of its customers and employés, but it is also a public body having educational aims and objects."

Mr. Greening has been its Managing Director since its commencement. The Association has published thirty-eight volumes of the *Agricultural Economist*, with illustrations equal to the best magazines.

Labour Co-partnership Association.—For seventeen years the principle of profit-sharing with labour had been dead in the official workshops of the movement. Capitalist workshops had been set up instead. In 1884 it was considered necessary for the credit of Co-operation to found a new association of Industrial Co-partnership—in the interest and elevation of labour—the main object of the Rochdale Pioneers. This was done at the Derby Congress of 1884. M. de Boyve, of Nîmes, E. Vansittart Neale, E. O. Greening, Joseph Greenwood, Abraham Greenwood, J. M. Ludlow, Thomas Hughes, and G. J. Holyoake were the chief promoters of the new association. Messrs. E. V. Neale, Lloyd Jones, E. O. Greening, Harold Cox, Bolton King, and E. W. Greening were the first executive. A few years later three singularly ardent and able adherents appeared in the movement. Henry Vivian, Thomas Blandford, and Aneurin Williams. Labour co-partnership was then an unknown name, and it involved some research to discover the few societies existing which came under that description. Mr. Henry Vivian, in his admirable paper on "Industrial

Democracy," gives the following figures showing the progress made in the establishment of societies based on Co-partnership principles, dealing with working class businesses in England.

	1903.	1904.
Societies at Work	120	120
[1] Capital	620,007	652,623
Trade	1,069,504	1,079,904
[2] Profits	47,834	40,591
Losses	2,463	5,269
Dividend on Wages	8,556	6,171

We were told, with Russian confidence, that the Port Arthur of Capitalism would never be taken. Anti-labour partisans told us we must go "outside the movement" to carry out our views. We would not go outside—that would be schism. This principle of Labour Co-partnership means that all those engaged shall share in the profit, capital, control, and responsibility. It seeks (1) in the co-operative movement to aid all forms of Co-partnership production; (2) in other businesses to induce employers and employed to adopt profit-sharing; (3) to encourage investment tending in the same direction.

Earl Grey presented a medal to some hundreds of Northern co-operators, whom he entertained at Howick, bearing the magic words :—

"From Slaves to Serfs,
From Serfs to Hirelings,
From Hirelings to Partners."

This is what the Federation of Co-partnership Societies aims at.

Co-operative Distribution leaves the man-slave, or serf, or hireling to his lot. It does nothing for him as a worker. Co-partnership does everything. The Christmas of 1903 had a Co-partnership celebration of which no precedent had ever been known in England. Every employé of the South Metropolitan Gas Company received an illuminated card containing the message :—

"Capital, Co-partnership, Labour. Christmas, 1903.—The directors wish you and those dear to you a very happy

[1] Shares, loans, and reserves.
[2] Including interest on shares but not on loans.

Christmas. The profit-sharing system, started in 1889, has advanced to Co-partnership in 1903. It is the desire of the directors that every employé should be a co-partner with them in the property, and a co-worker in promoting the prosperity of our Company. There are now 4,380 co-partners holding £114,865 of stock, of a market value of £136,115, who have also on deposit at interest £46,500, a grand total in the Company amounting to £182,615."

Co-partnership pays the public as well as the men. The South Metropolitan Gas Company announced a reduction of 2d. per 1,000 feet in its gas charges. This means that the people of South London are being supplied at 2s. 1d., while the people of North London, served by the Gas Light and Coke Company without Co-partnership, are compelled to pay 3s.

When philosophy can no longer deny facts, it explains them away by definitions, diving into bottomless pits of profundity, representing that if those engaged in labour were fully paid, there would be no profit. That is to say that if the worker was paid at first all due to him, he would have nothing further to claim. Thus the reader is landed on what the Irish preacher called a shoreless sea. It is because no state has existed in which the worker has had his due, that he seeks it in an allotment of profit—his only mode of obtaining it.[1]

Then another class of adversaries aver that the concession of profits is no incentive to labour. If wages augmented by profit-sharing means no increase of work, or thought, or care, or economy on the part of the worker, all who seek situations where higher salaries are paid are impostors. Higher wages are only offered as an inducement to higher service. But if this is not intended, it is fraudulent in those who seek or accept them.

It marks the advance in public opinion that the splendid verbiage of Carlyle in praise of labour sounds very hollow—where it is unaccompanied by any exhortation of duty on the part of the employer in seeing to the adequate remuneration of labour.

[1] Karl Marx's theory of Capital is summed up in the proposition that if Labour was properly paid there would be no profit. The modern Socialist is against profit to the joy of capitalists and commercialists.

Some one praising Whistler's pictures as so very natural, the artistic egotist answered, "Yes! Nature is creeping up to me." Without egotism it may be said that industry is creeping towards Co-partnership.

The munificence of Count de Chambrun endowed with an income of £4,000 a year the Musée Social of Paris. This great Institute, situated at 5, Rue Las Cases, Paris, promotes in France the participation of the worker in the benefits of his industry. One day the Co-partnership Federation of Great Britain may unite with the Musée Social and with societies of participation in other continental cities and in America, and restore the International Congress of Participation. The English offices of the Labour Co-partnership Association are at 22, Red Lion Square, London, where No. 36 was the first seat of co-operative propagandism in 1836. *Labour Co-partnership* (of which eleven volumes have appeared) is the organ of the movement.

In the town of Leicester there are ten Co-partnership businesses, and in Kettering there are five. The reader will find these Co-partnership productive industries include cotton, linen, silk, wool, boots and shoes, leather, metal, hardware, wood-work, corn-milling, baking, building and quarrying, printing, and book-binding.

In a masterly statement of the status of Co-operation in Great Britain made by Mr. J. C. Gray in the *Arena* of 1905, it is shown that in the productive departments of the English and Scottish Wholesale 16,000 employés are engaged—that their sales amount to nearly £5,000,000, and their profits to more than £183,000. Production carried on by distributive societies employs 18,000 and the sales amount to £5,000,000, which shows, as Mr. Gray observes, that criticism often made "that Co-operation has been successful in distribution, but in production its efforts have not been commensurate," is not borne out by facts. Had the English Wholesale remained as founded—a Buying Society simply—the workshops would have been as numerous as the stores.

CHAPTER LI

CO-OPERATION SELF-DEFENSIVE INDIVIDUALISM

"England's greatest treasure and force is, not in her navy, nor in her wealth, but in that Individualism, which, no doubt, frequently exceeds its aim and turns angular and grotesque, but on the whole constitutes an asset, a force greater than that of any other Empire."—DR. EMIL REICH.

CO-OPERATION is self-defensive Individualism, made attractive by amity, strengthened by interest, and rendered effective by association. It has from the first appealed to self-help and inculcated self-dependence. Competition, although an unevadable law of Nature, is mitigated by man with the condition that the freedom of the individual shall be kept within limits of neither fettering nor harming others in the exercise of equal rights.

In the same manner it is a necessary condition of human progress that every form of association, co-operative or socialistic, voluntary or otherwise, shall refrain from neutralising, suppressing, or superseding those personal and individual rights upon which the welfare, the security, and self-defence of society depend.

The individual can do little save by concert with others. This co-operation he seeks by volunteering Co-partnership in the gains of all mutual undertakings.

Co-operation has a message to Labour. That is the reason of its being. Ah, Labour! there are people who have a heart so cold towards thee that an Arctic explorer would be frozen to death in his attempts to reach the Polar region of their sensibility. Labour! praised and plundered, the sole means of life, to which all progress is owing, by which everybody profits, and which few reward! Co-operation is thy sole

available path of independence. It puts here and now into the workers' hands the means to cancel their captivity. It waits for no future—its field of operation is the present. It needs no conversion of the world for the commencement of change—it needs but self-help and concert.

Co-operation is Co-partnership in the workshop and in the store. Co-partnership in production is now officially conceded a place side by side with co-operative distribution,[1] of which it is not the antagonist nor the rival, but the assertion of the original co-operative principle.

The essence of ethical Co-operation is participation. It is that which has caused the co-operative stores to exist, and were participation withdrawn they would die in a day. Unless the principle of the store is extended to the workshop, the workshop is not co-operative in the plain sense of the term. If "taxation without representation is tyranny," co-operation without participation is imposture, judged in the light of its essential principle.

Co-partnership in the workshop began earlier, goes further, and means more than co-operative distribution. The theory of Co-operation, based on the Co-partnership of individuals, will be new to members of later years unversed in the aims of the old Pioneers who made the movement. It therefore requires consideration to state the case, so as not to chill the susceptibilities of those who have never breathed the bracing upland air of higher Co-operation.

Sir Albert Rollit lately told us of a mayor who, on taking his seat on the bench for the first time, assured the bar that "during his year of office he would spare no effort to be neither partial nor impartial." My ambition is to be impartial, merely indicating the logical course a society must pursue which seeks to realise co-operative principles.

When the stores established a buying society participation was the soul of it, and for a few years this society accorded a share of profits to those in its employ. Then this rule was abandoned, and Co-operation was changed into a commercial movement. A democratic society which asks no ethical questions or, nor takes any pledges from, those who join it, keeps an open door through which pirates may enter and

[1] "Industrial Co-operation," published by the Co-operative Union, p. 20.

scuttle the ship, and officials were soon found doing it. Some never comprehended ethical Co-operation, but took it to be a new method of commercialism. Some were particularists, as were workers in Oldham mills who shared the profits of the concern. Some of them became shareholders in another profit-sharing mill. They showed willingness to receive it in the mill in which they worked, but always discovered "particular" reasons why it was impossible where they were the employers. That participation increased excellence in work, economy in material, diminished cost in supervision, and created pride in the workshop, which is the grace of labour—was disbelieved or disregarded. Every consideration gave way before the desire of gaining an immediate advantage at the expense of others. When workmen became directors, it was soon found they had no wish to see workmen of the class to which they belonged, on an equality with themselves. In the stores they did not attempt to take away the profit of the purchasers, to whom a hundred shops were open ; whereas the workman had scant chance of another situation if he gave up the one he held. So the workman could be kept lean while the consumer was fed fat. Co-partnership was the beginning of equality which has no other sign, and only men of strong sense of right and strong sympathy with it cared to concede it. From 1864 to 1904, a period of forty years, no single director has ever uttered a word in favour of participation of profits in their workshops. The more astute saw that by retaining the profits of the workshop and sharing them with the stores it would conduce to business. Whether it was conducive to co-operative honour or fidelity to co-operative principles did not appear to concern them ; as Mr. Mitchell, Chairman of the Wholesale, told the Parliamentary Committee, "it was not good business" to give heed to such considerations. That was capitalism, not Co-operation, which spoke then. There is this to be said in palliation. The private traders were militant adversaries, and it was a great temptation to prove our capacity to defy them on their own ground.

The Co-operative Congress, by its constitution, is the Parliament of the societies, and theoretically makes laws for all and exacts conformity to them. Three times this Congress has called upon the Buying Society to re-establish

profit-sharing in its workshops, and this single society has defied Congress; and at the same time it calls upon the societies to be "loyal to it," while it is disloyal to them. This is, as has been said, always a mystery to foreigners. The mystery would not so much matter did not the participation of profits disappear with it. The thing wanted is to have a right conception of Co-operation, which means individual effort in concert with others for the equitable advantage of all.

There are several kinds of Co-operation. There is Co-operation in the Church for ends many view—educationally, at least—with dismay. There is Co-operation in Parliament to keep the people from their rightful share in Government. There is Co-operation among war-contriving financiers, which made Mr. Ruskin say that "what he feared was—Co-operation among scoundrels." But that form of Co-operation originated by the followers of Robert Owen is ethical, which begins in self-help, and acts in concert with others for the common advantage. An individual is lost, save in the savage state, where he can kill those who have something he wants or who endeavour to take from him what he has possessed himself of. The co-operator is an individual who seeks his own advantage under conditions consistent with equal advantage of others. Co-operation is not intended to neutralise individual power, but to increase it by protecting it from competition to which, by acting against the interest of others, he would be exposed. The inspiration of self-effort and self-dependence is the primal object of Co-operation. Its principle is equality, its policy association.

If Co-partnership workshops were numerous it is conceivable they would need a wholesale buying society for themselves; but its functions would be to buy, not manufacture, though stores may do it. The benefits a purchasing society can confer on stores are great. Still, certain disadvantages of its manufacturing are to be taken into account. Where a buying society manufactures it prevents or discountenances stores setting up local workshops, whereby they could give employment to many of their members, which would develop local genius in manufactures. By establishing model workshops stores would create a higher order of co-operators, and exercise a new industrial influence around them. In every town

there are trades which supply local wants. One or more Co-partnership workshops among them would be an advantage to the members of the store and to the workmen of the town in which the store is situated.

The desire of a co-operative buying society is to supply to members pure consumable commodities or perfect articles of use. Therefore some have thought that by producing what their members require they can be sure of their quality. At the same time there are all about other producing firms, honest and capable, whose goods can be trusted, and a buying society, having funds at command, can stipulate for the best articles on the best terms. This is precisely what the Co-operative Wholesale was formed to do. It was expected that it would encourage the formation of Co-partnership manufacturing societies for providing farm produce for the consumption of their stores. Being the chief buyers, it could insist upon the honesty of edible articles and excellency in workmanship. Equitable conditions of labour, such as Co-partnership workshops establish, could be stipulated for, which would increase the popularity of its business.

If the Productive Federation had a central buying society which, from the hope of more gain, commenced the manufacture of what their members required of machines or materials, it would become a great competing power against their own societies. Local genius would be paralysed, local experience would be lost, and local enterprise would be checked. Besides, this central manufacturing association would, as a matter of business, prefer to supply no goods but its own, and would check all local undertakings, decrying and belittling them as unnecessary and futile. Here collectivism would kill co-operation, and frustrate the useful aims of self-helping labour. A buying society would give them unlimited choice in the markets of the world. One great manufacturing society would control them all, and each society would be a sort of tied house. The great manufacturing society would be more or less a trust, which is the abuse of the organisation of labour.

In comparing federal workshops to "tied houses" under one manufacturing society, the meaning is not that they are like public-houses held by brewers, tied by an external power, but

that they would be tied by their own cupidity. If their buying society manufactures machines used in the workshops of the federation, each workshop, if it consents to share the gains of manufacturing, takes the machines, and shuts itself out from selecting amid the new contrivances which the ingenuity of the world is continually producing. Another disadvantage of a buying society that also manufactures is, that it no sooner sees a local group of co-operators setting up in business and selling to federated societies than it itself may commence making the same article; or, when it cannot do that, it may appeal to the cupidity of the shareholders, who "for a mess of pottage" would sell their fellow-workers into hired servitude, extinguish co-partnership, and arrest their self-employing, self-helping education.

The advantages of manufacturing may be greater than the disadvantages of restricted choice in the market and frustrated action in the workshop; but it is well to understand what the disadvantages are.

Two things ought to be borne in mind. One is, what naturally put the idea of wholesale manufacturing into the minds of those who began it. It was the refusal of private wholesale dealers to sell goods to co-operative societies which compelled them in self-defence to provide the goods themselves. Second, the difficulty of obtaining commodities unadulterated, which they were pledged to supply pure to the stores, obliged them to undertake their production as far as possible, that they might be able to answer for their purity and genuineness. When the purchasing power of the buying society grows it acquires ascendancy in the markets, and can command pure edibles and sound articles of household use. At this point Mr. Vansittart Neale, who had Co-partnership in his blood, drew up a scheme by which the workshops of the buying society—like the Godin workshops of Guise and the Nelson works at Leclaire, in America—could eventually pass into the possession and control of the workmen engaged in them.

The tendency of a wholesale manufacturing society to overlap the boundaries of individual life, and become engrossive in its operations wherever a path of gain is discerned, is not a vice peculiar to such an association, but the natural tendency of

every business concern, workshop, or store. Every society having the power of expansion inevitably covets further expansion, unless some limit of principle or prudence restrains it. When the Liberal Caucus was first established in Birmingham under Mr. Chamberlain, it having the power of dominating the town, did so until Conservatives were excluded from every office and were unable to hold a public meeting. Yet the minority of Conservatives were entitled to representation. Liberalism itself, without it, loses the advantage of counter-criticism. The dominancy which gives no one else a chance has reached a point at which it ought to halt, or it will one day be put back by revolt. Co-operation and Socialism alike need this policy of restraint.

The individualism of Co-operation alone keeps it from aggression. It alone prescribes the duty of promoting individual life, and securing to all groups of associated workers equal opportunities of attaining growth and character.

I am not a congress, nor a committee, nor a director prescribing the views others should hold—or the views they ought to take. I am merely a co-operative writer explaining ideas acquired in long conversance with the movement. Any one may differ from me who sees reason for it. My industrial creed is short, but complete :

> There is a destiny which makes us brothers ;
> None takes his way alone ;
> All that we send into the lives of others,
> Comes back into our own.[1]

There might have been some defence in 1864 for depriving the workshops of that participation which made them co-operative, from the need of money to promote expansion. Now the day of prosperity has come a return to the integrity of principle is possible and likely to occur. In the *Wheatsheaf* for February, 1905, an inspired organ, seven balance-sheets are given of seven manufacturing departments of the Wholesale Society, in which are employed 6,700 persons, the profit made by them amounting to £78,500. Taking these seven departments as a probable average of manufacturing profits, £78,500 are paid to the stores, which means about £12 taken from each

[1] Markham.

of those who labour in the workshop and given to the consumer in the store. If the consumers really understood this they would readily consent to £5 falling to the lot of those who labour, and be content with the remaining £7, to which they have no claim. They contribute nothing more for the cause than the pleasant exertion of indolent digestion. This limited remittance of the levy on labour would not hurt any member of a store, while it would give to labour a dignity of participation which no trade union has attempted to claim for it.

Societies will naturally manufacture or farm, but the invariable condition should be participation of profit with all employed—men, women, and young people.

The interest of the State, of progress, and of industry is the development of individuality and personality in men and women. Without self-help and self-trust the life of the poor is reduced to monotonous helplessness, servitude, and charity. Ethical co-operation seeks to prevent this by putting participation in the fruits of labour into the hands of all whose industry creates the wealth of the State and the profits of commerce. Co-operation furnishes reasons for amity and unity—amity which pledges itself to action consistent with the welfare of others ; unity within the limits of practical efficiency. Branches should consist of such groups of adherents as are contiguous to the central society, whose life and management they can share and control, as is attempted in Leeds. Distant societies should be as planets in an independent orbit, federated with, but not subjugated by, a larger body, having only a borrowed, not a self-conscious, self-directed life.

Co-operation is not intended to submerge, but to increase, individual life by ensuring to every one participation in the emoluments and direction of his vocation. If the object of a party is the personal improvement of the community, all gain is loss which involves the sacrifice of individuality, self-action, manliness, and high character, the qualities expressed by the term "individuality."

Nationality is but the individuality of a race. "The sentiment," as Mr. George Wyndham told the students of the University of Glasgow, "is lofty, but it may harden into nationalism. Yet it is not on that account to be lightly rejected. Any nation—and therefore every nation within the

State—needs character, if only to redeem it from a featureless cosmopolitanism." It is only by active individuality that the life of stores and workshops can save the co-operative movement from that "featureless monotony" which makes even goodness tiresome in every age. Centralisation is the doctrine of despots, and paralyses all who are under it.

Companies have their limits. That point is where they become trusts and directors begin to frustrate other companies likely to serve the public as well or better than themselves; or when, by buying up all concerns standing in their way, they compel the public to buy from them at whatever rate they think it prudent to levy. They thus acquire the power of fraud in the name of "business," just as military marauders descend upon a country and plunder it in the name of war or Imperialism.

When stores were first commenced they became small centres of social life, in which were held conversaziones of purchasers. Each store had a news-room, which served for a little library, and a debating-chamber in which store questions and public affairs were discussed. The mission of Co-operation —if such an overworn word as "mission" may be used—is to advance enterprise and secure to industry its just reward. The true aim, therefore, of social pioneers was to make Co-operation the agent of society—not to attempt to make it the master manufacturer and merchant of the world. The store was an institution to which members were attracted by interest, and kept together by opportunities of personal improvement. Wherever a branch grows large enough it should be, as has been said, encouraged to become an independent store. Federation, not organisation, is the watchword of progress. The organisation of ideas in a community is the death of general intelligence, and the organisation of labour, carried to excess, takes charm, emulation, and hope out of industry. Civilisation is a protection against the competition of the savage; Co-operation is protection against the competition of civilisation. Co-operation may mitigate reckless competition, but does not destroy competition itself. Competition opens, and keeps open, the pathway of progress. The alternative of competition is monopoly, and monopoly means the opportunity of the unscrupulous and the plunder of the many.

It is no uncommon thing to find participation decried as a loss of money. Let us grant that it is, and that economy is everything. Why should we give dividends in the store? That is as much a loss of money as dividends given in workshops. The consumer spends only his money; the worker spends his life. The rank and file of store purchasers do nothing but buy. All in the workshop labour. What exclusive claim has the eater over the worker? If unlimited economic law is to prevail, collectivism is the thing. Why should we not have one State journal, and save the ten thousand editorships and their staffs which the public now pay for? Why should not a single physician prescribe for everybody, and save the cost of thousands of the faculty? Why should a hundred advertisers tell us every morning that each has a remedy that will cure everybody, and send you hundreds of lithographed "testimonials" of their truth? Why should not the issue of books be stopped in the name of economy? There are already more books than anybody reads, and more wisdom in the world than anybody practises. There are long-established formulas for arresting this profligate evil. If new books agree with those already extant, they are needless; if additional, they are unnecessary, as the market of wisdom is already overstocked. Parliamentary Government is a great expense. There are numerous political save-alls, who tell us, like Carlyle, that the "national palaver" is all waste, and that a Committee of Superior Persons, always to be picked up at the clubs, would manage things much better. Economy, conscientiously carried out, goes a long way. One economic Church would save all souls, and save the public loss of time in thinking, and save the expenses of State Churches and Nonconformity. The vast regions of food and dress admit of enormous reduction of expenditure. The collectivist of economic science would render life not worth living in a month, which would indeed save everything.

Pope said "the worst of madmen was a saint run mad"; but economic philosophers run more mad, unless good sense takes care of their principles. In Co-operation under economic ascendancy libraries would disappear, education would be abolished as uneconomic expenditure. Economic science unlimited would produce profligacy in misery. Men and women

would dress in drab, idols would be the only sculpture, no picture would be painted, song would be silent, no one would go abroad, and Society would consist of economic fools.

Everything has its limit. Sane economy signifies the carefulness of means in the production of a desirable result. Economy is a method of increasing the means of happiness; when made an end it is waste. The equitable sharing of profits increases them. That is its business defence.

Those who would judge fairly the co-operative movement as we know it, must not forget that the first thing its promoters had to do was to make it commercially successful. Its principles might be lofty, with a dash of the millennium in them; but would they pay? That was the question everybody asked. The second generation of co-operators, therefore, mainly set themselves to prove that men might live by co-operative principles. They had to enter the fields of commerce and manufacture. If Co-operation appears somewhat to have lost itself in commercialism, forgetful that its object and recommendation was that of moralising trade, let it be remembered how it became oblivious of its nobler promise. Co-partnership is now the feature and the faith of the movement. So, taken as a whole, Co-operation is realising its industrial and ethical ideal. It may be imperfect and somewhere inconsistent; but what system is not? Even Christianity, with all the cherubim hovering over it, cannot be kept straight. Co-operation is merely human. Yet it has done great things, and will do more. It revealed, what Lassalle denied, the possibility of self-help to the people, as it had never been revealed before. It proved what few professed and fewer believed—that honesty in trade and commerce paid. It showed that men needed little from the State save equality of opportunity, and it is now endowing Labour with the right of property. It may be that Co-operation has made more promises than any other movement; but it has fulfilled more promises than any other ever made.

I may wish to see Co-operation go farther and better realise its higher aims; but, nevertheless, I value it for what it has done and is doing, and would withstand any who decry or belittle it. If it goes no further, I shall stand by it; if it advances, I shall go with it.

Who is not sick of Carlyle's hollow praise of Labour echoed by the newspapers? "Blessed is he who has found his work. Let him ask no other blessedness." Not even the blessedness of being paid for it. No trade union nor collectivist society has proposed any resolution like the one brought forward by Mr. Walter Morrison, and passed unanimously by the Co-operative Congress of 1873, namely, "That it is of the essence of Co-operation to recognise the right of labour to a substantial share in the profits it creates."

A lava storm of hot denial burst upon us from the Vesuvius of Capitalism for saying this. The economic philosophers proved there was no such thing as profit. Other people know differently. "The merchant calls his surplus profit; the clergyman calls it stipend; the lawyer calls it fees; the banker calls it interest; the shareholder calls it dividend; the landlord calls it rent; the statesman calls it salary; royalty calls it grants."

Co-operation teaches the worker how to retain honest profit in his own hands at the present time, not in an unknown future. If he does not it may never be restored to him. What chance is there that Socialism, with all its noble aims, will be able to arrest the giant tendency of every party—capitalist and workman alike—of grasping at all that lies in their way, suffer who may? What can avert it, unless a nobler individuality can be cultivated? Where can be found a better class of workmen than the directors of the Co-operative Wholesale Society, yet they have taken from the workshops all the profits of labour? No society can be more democratic than the stores which appoint them. There is no remedy except by creating in the conscience of individual voters a sense of honour which shrinks from predatory profit. That was a great day in England when Granville Sharp obtained the decision that when the foot of a slave trod on English ground he was free. That is what Co-partnership Co-operation accomplishes for industry in the noble workshops it has established and which exists in some of the manufacturing stores. On their sacred ground the subjugation of the hired workman ceases, and the badge of his servitude falls from his neck, and he becomes a co-partner. How can this be done save by a proud individuality which puts principle first and profit second—which spurns, for its own gain, to limit

the equal opportunities of workers? No committee discovers new truth, or sees a new path of progress, or has intrepidity to advance upon it. It is the individual conscience that prompts the onwardness of the world and exalts the character of mankind. Therefore Co-operation is self-defensive Individualism, and seeks the alliance of all brave men and true men to stand up with it for amity and independence—for manliness and fairness. Conscience is the soul of progress, and conscience dwells in the individual.

The quality of the true co-operator may be seen in the noble words in which Mr. Gladstone described Dr. Dollinger. "He had," said Mr. Gladstone, "more than any man I have known, a historic spirit. His mind turned on the pole of truth and fact. He regarded error as falsehood. He told the truth when he knew it by instinct, regardless of all considerations to the contrary."

The aim of this History is to indicate the policy warranted by co-operative principle.

APPENDIX

If after this life is ended Death gave us an opportunity of writing an appendix to it, what omissions in the story of our life would be supplied, what acts of commission would be repaired! An author is more fortunate who, on seeing his volume closed, finds some relevant parts of it have been omitted unavoidably—most convenient and disguising word which ought to be negligently—can supply them.

Singular Abnegation of Employés.—When a trade union of employés was proposed years ago Mr. Thomas Hughes thought such a union a scandal, as implying that workers needed to defend their interests against Co-operative Committees. He did not appear to see that a competitive policy, as respects labour, is strongly represented on most store committees. There is now a society called the "Amalgamated Union of Co-operative Employés," who have held fourteen annual meetings, but have not the word *participation* in their "objects." They are continually appealed to by committees to take interest in Co-operation. But why should they when their employers take no co-operative interest in them? As mere servants they take a servant's interest in the business. The Union of bright smart servers do not appear to know that they are in the service of a body whose watchword is Participation, and that every one in that service is entitled to share in its benefits. How can they be enthusiasts about a system, the principle or which they do not understand? If they did they would publish in their papers a list of the noble "Sunrise" societies, who give Co-operation its splendid name by their honourable consistency. This Union not only does

not do this, but gives its influence against its own order, and prevents its position being improved. Every year they go into co-operative halls, holding their meetings, saying to committees, "Look at us. We have no share of profits. We do not ask it. For fourteen years we have kept silence upon it. We have no ambition to be other than mere hired servers." They could do better for their Union than this. They have wit, moderation, and good sense. Are they not aware that when the voices are counted in favour of progress, their silence is construed into acquiescence with the forces against it?

The Women's Guild.—Another instance not less singular of obliviousness of the advantage of working for progress in the Co-operative movement is afforded in the Women's Co-operative Guild. It was fortunate in having for its foundress in 1883 Mrs. Mary Lawrenson, who saw clearly that if the mistress of the household might, by dealing at the Store, save 10 per cent. of expenditure, how much more important it was that the head of the household, from whom the income is derived, should obtain 10 per cent. upon his labour, which would also be derived by every member of the family employed in a profit-sharing establishment. Miss Greenwood, who in the earlier years of the Women's Guild was Vice-President, never kept silent upon this advantage, which appealed to the interest of the mistress of the house. Those who promoted the formation of the Guild depended upon this sentiment for advancing participation among the assistants in the store and all who were engaged in its workshops. Yet for years nothing has been heard of this question at their Congresses or Conferences. I wrote to one responsible for the administration of the Women's Guild to explain this peculiarity and indifference, who replied that participation was regarded as a mere method of business. It seems incredible that any lady of intelligence, as was the one to whom I wrote, could be unaware that participation was the essential principle of Co-operation.

Thomas Blandford.—A singular figure entered the co-operative movement subsequent to the appearance of this history in 1878. Blandford was a young Irishman with all the ardency of his race and of conspicuous self-devotion. He

wore himself out by his ceaseless exertions which left Co-operation a legacy of a great example. He was the originator of the Congress Shilling Fund, which at Paisley exceeded £70, and leaves in each place some permanent memorial of the visit of the Congress. His name is perpetuated among us by the institution of the travelling Blandford Scholarship.

Distinguished Foreign Names.—Foremost among the eminent names in other lands distinguished in Co-operation now living is M. Edouard de Boyve, of Nimes, who has for so many years conducted *L'Emancipation* of Paris. He has been also an inspirer in England of international participation in the benefits of labour. Next to him must be named Professor Charles Gide, distinguished for incessant and lucid advocacy of Co-operation. Mr. Henry W. Wolff is a Continental promulgator whom it is difficult to locate. Like Cobden he may be described as the international man of Co-operation. As a linguist, a traveller, and a journalist he has devoted his varied attainments to making Co-operation international.

It was Sig. Luzzatti, who, addressing Mr. Neale and myself at Bologna, said, "Co-operators were the explorers of humanity. They had discovered upon its great map the kingdom of Co-operation, which they had conquered and now occupy."

In America there is the Rev. Edward Everett Hale, D.D., the Prince of Co-operative writers, who first did for Co-operation in the United States what Harriet Martineau did for Political Economy in England—made it as readable as romance. Nicholas Gilman is an influential authority upon the subject. N. O. Nelson, who will always be counted American, although he is a Norwegian by nationality, will be remembered from his founding the profit-sharing city of Leclaire before-mentioned (p. 465). Long Buckby, Northampton, has built a "Holyoake Terrace," containing eighteen six-roomed houses, seventeen of which are owned by the occupiers. Ever since Wilkie Collins put "Holyoake Square" into "Basil," other towns have similar friendly memories.

Courtesy of the King.—It remains to be mentioned that on the Coronation of His Majesty, the operatives of the Havelock foot gear manufacturing society sent the request, transmitted by me to Lord Knollys, to be permitted to present a

specimen of their craftsmanship among the Coronation gifts of the day. By courtesy of Lord Knollys, permission was given, and a handsome example of their workmanship was duly received at Marlborough House. This was a Co-operative distinction peculiar to Labour Co-partnership.

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